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No. 1342

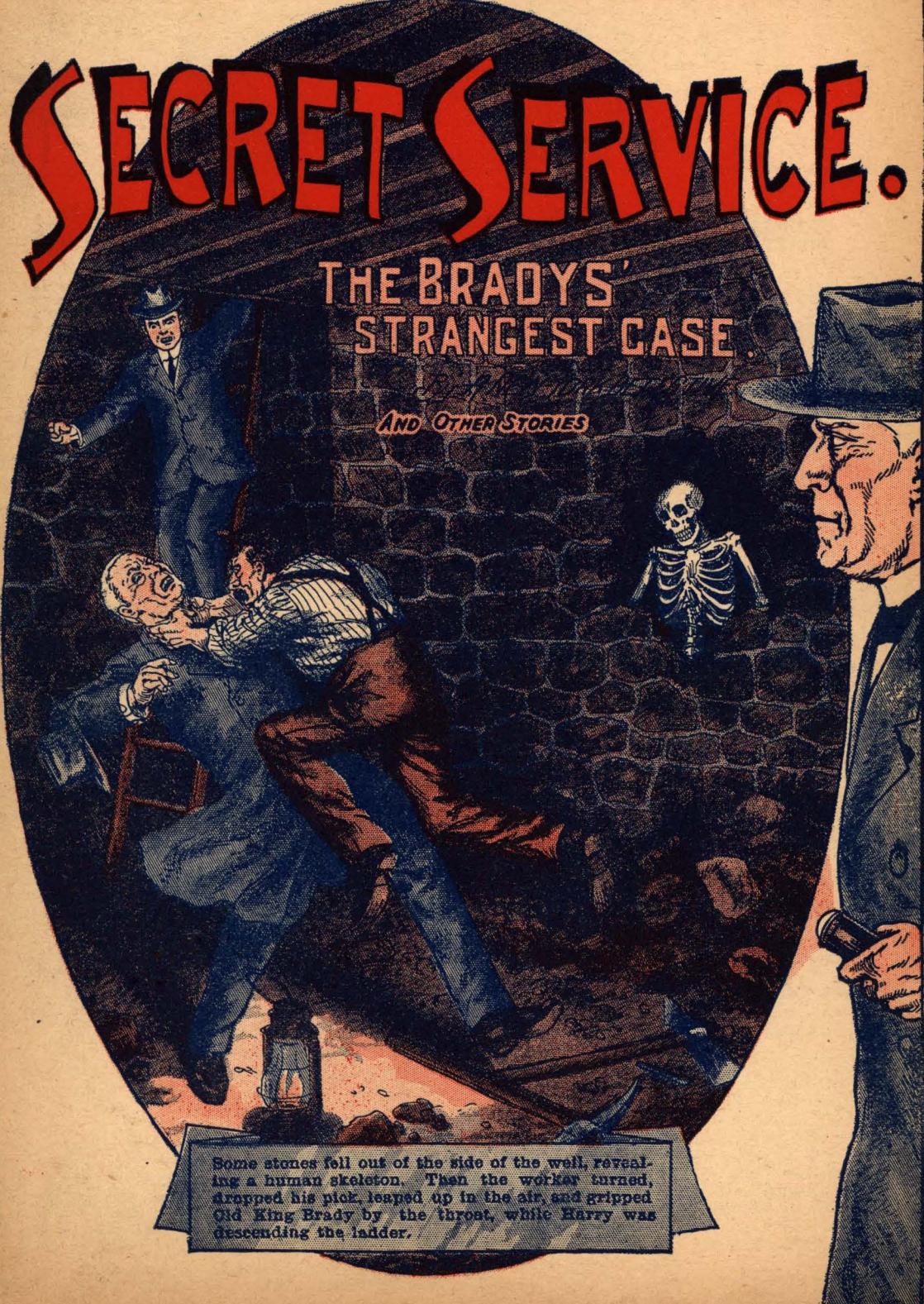
NEW YORK, OCTOBER 10, 1924

Price 10 Cents

SECRET SERVICE.

THE BRADYS'
STRANGEST CASE.

AND OTHER STORIES



Some stones fell out of the side of the well, revealing a human skeleton. Then the worker turned, dropped his pick, leaped up in the air, and gripped Old King Brady by the throat, while Harry was descending the ladder.

Are You A Radio Fan? Read Page 24.

SECRET SERVICE

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No. 1342

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 10, 1924

Price 10 Cents

The Bradys' Strangest Case

OR, THE SKELETON IN THE WELL

By A NEW YORK DETECTIVE

CHAPTER I.—A Bad Beginning.

The Bradys had done business with Homer Hittinger, the Boston banker, before, and that is why they were disposed to take up with a case which was a strange proposition from the start. The beginning of it was when the letter was received at the office of the Brady Detective Bureau, on Union square, New York. Old King Brady was out, so his partner, Young King Brady, opened the mail. Alice Montgomery, the accomplished female sleuth, happened in just as Harry, as Young King Brady is usually called, had finished reading the letters, of which there were several.

"Anything new?" she inquired.

"Only this," replied Harry, picking up the Hittinger letter, and he read as follows:

"Boston, November 20, 19—.

"To Old King Brady,

"New York City:

"Dear Sir—Doubtless you will recall the writer and the Caringford will case, in which you assisted some five years ago.

"I am in deep trouble, and nothing but prompt action can save me from ruin and disgrace.

"What must be done is to discover the skeleton of my grandfather, who vanished mysteriously sixty-five years ago.

"This, of course, is a peculiar proposition, but I am not without a clue, which in the hands of a skilful detective like yourself might work up into something substantial.

"What I would like to have you do is to meet me on Train 61, Mass. Central Division Boston & Maine R. R., to-morrow. I shall board the train at Ryeland station, about twenty miles out from Boston, when we will confer and arrange our plans.

"I presume you remember me sufficiently well to identify me, but it is necessary to inform you that I have lost over 100 pounds in the past year, and am now practically a walking skeleton. I will wear the broad-brimmed white hat like your own, which will aid you to identify me.

"As to compensation, I can only add that should you succeed in finding this skeleton, you will find

me most liberal. In case of failure, I am a ruined man, as I said, and can do nothing for you, but to guarantee you against actual loss, I enclose a check for a hundred dollars, which I assume will cover immediate expenses.

"There is no time to answer this letter. If you accept, wire simply 'Yes' to my office, 91 State street. If I hear nothing I shall assume that you cannot take up the case. If you can give me your assistance I shall be most grateful.

"Very truly yours,
"Homer Hittinger."

"A remarkable letter," observed Alice as Harry finished reading.

"Decidedly remarkable," was the reply.

Just then Old King Brady came in to read the letter, and he accepted the case at once. Then came the question of the telegram. It was now 5 P. M.

"It seems strange that Mr. Hittinger should be at his office at so late an hour as this telegram must arrive," the old detective remarked, "but I must go by the card and send it, although I am strongly impressed against doing so."

"I don't see how you can get out of doing so," remarked Harry. "He will think we decline the case if you don't."

"Exactly."

"Suppose you telephone and see if he is in the office?" suggest Alice.

"I can do that, of course," replied Old King Brady, "but it would seem better to obey instructions. The letter is very emphatic. Send the despatch, Harry."

Young King Brady promptly obeyed. Meanwhile the old detective consulted his time-tables. He found to his surprise that Train 61, on the Mass. Central Division of the Boston & Maine stopped at Ryeland station next day at 4 A. M., going east. By taking the midnight express for Springfield, and at that city proceeding to Northampton, they would be able to catch Train 61 on the Massachusetts Central, providing they made their connections. Perhaps this was what Mr. Hittinger intended. Still it did seem a strange arrangement all around.

Again Old King Brady decided to go by the

THE BRADYS' STRANGEST CASE

card and leave for Springfield with his partners on the midnight, and yet this plan was changed, for upon returning to the office after supper, which it was necessary to do in order to make certain preparations for their journey, the detectives were surprised to receive an answer to their telegram, which read:

"Meet me on Train 22, Mass. Central Div. B. & M., Ryeland. Hittinger."

"Now then, he begins twisting things up already," said Old King Brady. "It is to be hoped that Train 22 reaches Ryeland at some more reasonable hour."

Examination of the time-table showed that this train hit Ryeland at 11:30 P. M. next day.

"A little better," said Old King Brady, "so after all we don't go to Boston to-day and can get a good night's sleep."

Such was the beginning of the case. Next afternoon saw the Bradys on their way to Northampton. They here boarded Train 22 and started on their long ride toward Boston.

When Train 22 pulled up at Ryeland the Bradys were on the alert, of course. There was but one man on the platform, and he certainly wore the big white hat, although to call him a walking skeleton would have been an exaggeration. Old King Brady also wore his big white hat with its extraordinary broad brim. Also the long blue coat with brass buttons, and the old-fashioned stock and stand-up collar.

"There he is," observed Harry.

"It would seem so," replied the old detective. "He is coming aboard."

The man, who was a person certainly over sixty, entered the cars, and taking one quick glance around, made for the detectives.

"Old King Brady, I believe," he said stiffly as the old detective rose to greet him.

"Why yes, you are Mr. Hittinger," was the reply.

"Exactly. What is left of him. Should you have known me?"

"Why, you have certainly changed since we last met. My partners, Young King Brady and Miss Montgomery."

Mr. Hittinger acknowledged the introduction.

"We get out at Bagnall, the next station," he said. "From there we proceed to my country house, Hightowers as I call it. Mrs. Hittinger is dead since we last met. It is three years now since I buried her. As for my son—my only child you will remember—"

This was as far as he got. Suddenly came a fearful crash. The car was thrown over upon its side. The Bradys had been caught in a head-on collision. Twenty killed outright, thirty-four wounded, more or less. That the detectives escaped with nothing worse than a few bruises and a good shaking up was nothing short of a miracle, seeing that several were killed outright in their car. After the removal of the dead and wounded, in which the Bradys assisted, the question arose as to what had become of Mr. Hittinger.

He was found laid out on the grass among the dead, and yet dead he certainly was not, although apparently very near it. It was Old King Brady who made this discovery. Being

something of a surgeon, the old detective at once turned his attention to the sufferer. Two doctors who had been summoned examined the man when they got around to him. These agreed with Old King Brady that it was a case of concussion of the brain, and between themselves that nothing could be done.

Neither of these doctors claimed acquaintance with Homer Hittinger, nor was there anyone among those who appeared on the scene who did. The detectives determined to remove the sufferer to Hightowers, which they learned was less than five miles distant. Through a farmer, whose house was near the scene of the accident, they procured a horse and wagon for this purpose. A mattress and pillow were placed in the wagon with the unconscious man laid upon it. The farmer declined to drive, pleading illness, so Harry undertook the commission, promising to return the wagon next day. Having received particular directions from the farmer as to the road, they accordingly started, leaving the scene of the accident at about one o'clock in the morning. Naturally, the detectives felt troubled. It looked as if Mr. Hittinger was probably permanently injured.

Harry drove on through the woods for about three miles, and then making a turn, ordered by the farmer, entered upon a rougher road which wound up the side of a densely wooded hill. The top reached, they came upon a large and handsome mansion, which in the daytime must have commanded a view of the country for miles around. It was entirely dark, as might have been expected at that hour. Harry drove directly to the door and sounded the bell several times, but no answer was obtained.

"They seem to sleep soundly in there," remarked Alice.

"Indeed yes," replied Old King Brady. "Give them the call, Harry. Try whistling through your fingers. I have heard you make noise enough that way to wake the dead."

But Young King Brady could not succeed in bringing anyone to life here, and it now came to be a very important question as to what could be done to obtain admittance, something all the more desirable, as it had turned out decidedly cold.

"A case for skeleton keys, I should say," declared Old King Brady. "Let us see what I can do in that line."

He was not able to do anything with the front door, but he did manage to open a door at the side. He and Alice now entered, finding a house elegantly furnished, but in a state of sad neglect. They lighted lamps, opened the front door, and brought the injured man in, placing him in one of the larger chambers upstairs. While Harry was busy with the horse out in the barn, Old King Brady lighted a fire in the chamber, for the room was exceedingly chilly. Presently Harry joined them and asked if anyone had turned up.

"Not yet. I think we may as well if we can't turn somebody up on our own account," replied Old King Brady. "It can't be that this house is deserted, and yet it begins to look that way."

It looked more so after they had made a hasty tour of the premises. For every room was found open and in the same state of dust and neglect.

CHAPTER II.—The Twin Brothers.

The Bradys put in the remainder of the night as best they could, taking turns at sleeping and watching the injured man, whose condition did not change. At half-past six a wagon drove up, and the bell having been rung, Harry went to the door. A spruce looking young man stood outside.

"I have brought the provisions," he said. "Shall I bring them in here or go around to the back door?"

"Who ordered provisions?" demanded Harry.

"Mr. Hittinger. I came from Ryeland."

"When did he order them?"

"Yesterday afternoon."

"Leave your wagon and come inside," said Harry. "Mr. Hittinger was caught in the railroad accident last night. He is here now in a bad way. I may want your help."

"Is that so?" cried the young man. "Terrible affair that."

"Yes, bad enough. Just stand here a minute; I'll be right back."

Harry was very shrewd. He was beginning to have his doubts about the wounded man actually being Homer Hittinger, but in these doubts Old King Brady did not share, declaring that he positively identified the man. Harry then entered the room where the old detective was, and notified him of the presence of the man, and asked if he should bring him into the house. Old King Brady told him to go ahead and bring him up. And this Harry did. The result upset Old King Brady's apple cart promptly.

"That's not Hittinger, but he looks mighty like him just the same," the driver promptly declared.

"Are you sure?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Positive. I know Hittinger well. He is so thin that one would think a wind might blow him away. There are other differences. He is not Hittinger, I tell you."

It was a puzzle. As the provisions had been paid for, Old King Brady decided that they better be left, as it would secure them a breakfast in any case. There were some things among them which is seemed best to put in the cellar. There were two ways of getting into the cellar, one outside and the other inside. Old King Brady opened the inside door with a skeleton key, and the young man went down with his basket. He came up in a hurry, looking rather scared.

"Say!" he exclaimed, "there is some one groaning down there."

"What!" cried Old King Brady, who was talking with Harry in the kitchen, and down the cellar stairs he went two steps at a time, with Harry at his heels.

"Is anyone here?" shouted Old King Brady as he got out his electric flashlight.

"Yes! Oh, has help come at last?" replied a doleful voice. "I am here—a prisoner!"

It was but a minute before they discovered a little room partitioned off in one corner, the door of which was locked.

"Are you in here?" demanded the old detective.

"Yes."

"I am going to open the door with a skeleton key. It may take a minute. Who are you?"

"I am Homer Hittinger, the owner of this house."

"There! What did I tell you?" cried Harry in triumph.

"It is certainly one on me," growled the old detective, and he proceeded to open the door.

And inside lying on the damp cement floor of the cellar, without even a pillow for his head to rest upon, was an elderly man who certainly filled the bill when one came to talk about skeletons. They set him free and got him upstairs, not without difficulty, for he was very weak.

"I have been here since yesterday noon," he told them as they were untying him. "I'll explain about it later—not now."

Alice prepared him a cup of coffee, and it was not until he had swallowed it that he seemed to want to talk or even to listen to any explanation. And Old King Brady seeing the condition the man was in, humored him in this. But at last the coffee was swallowed, and the banker looking hard at Old King Brady through a pair of restless eyes, said:

"Now, Mr. Brady, I am ready to do business. May I ask as a favor that I talk with you alone?"

There was a certain commanding air about the banker which made Old King Brady feel that he must go slow and let the man have his way. So he requested Harry to withdraw, although he usually prefers to have him present at these preliminary talks. Mr. Hittinger, who sat leaning back in a rocking chair in the library, then put the tips of his skeleton fingers together, and began in a slow measured fashion which Old King Brady now remembered so well that he wondered how he ever could have been deceived by the man upstairs.

"Mr. Brady, you received my letter?"

"I did, Mr. Hittinger."

"Then why did you not telegraph if you intended taking the case?"

"I did telegraph at once the word 'Yes,' as requested."

"Receiving no telegram," continued the banker, "I concluded that you had decided not to take hold. Undecided myself what to do, and wishing for certain reasons to take up my quarters here, I went to Ryeland and ordered those provisions late yesterday afternoon. They were to send them up last night, but it appears they neglected to do so until this morning. I then walked on to this house in spite of the distance, for I was particularly anxious to keep my presence here a secret for reasons—well, for private reasons not directly connected with the case. I had scarcely reached the house—I had entered, understand—when two masked men suddenly came upon me. They must have been hiding in the house, though how they got in I have no idea. While one held me covered with a revolver the other tied my hands behind me. I was forced to go down into the cellar, and there they tied my feet and left me as you found me. That, Mr. Brady, is the whole story. You and your partner were the first persons to come near me after that."

"You have no idea who is at the bottom of this outrage?"

The banker shifted uneasily in his chair.

"Well—er—well, no. I can't say I have," he replied altogether in such a fashion as to make

THE BRADYS' STRANGEST CASE

the old detective feel almost certain that he was not speaking the truth.

"Very well. Shall I tell my end of the story now?" he asked.

"I am waiting with all impatience," was the reply.

Old King Brady then explained the situation. Mr. Hittinger grew greatly excited.

"And that man is still in the house?" he cried. "I ought to have been told before."

"My dear sir, if you will permit me to say so, you have given me no opportunity to tell you."

"Take me to him at once!" cried the banker, who was all in a tremble.

Old King Brady led the way upstairs. Alice came out of the room looking grave.

"Well?" demanded the old detective. "He is gone?"

"Yes. He died about five minutes ago," was the reply.

Mr. Hittinger fairly tottered as he crossed the threshold. He shot one quick glance at the bed and then covered his face with his hands, uttering a deep groan.

"Some near relative," thought Old King Brady, and he drew Alice out of the room.

Peeping in a minute later, they saw the banker on his knees by the bedside. They waited. Harry joined them. It was ten minutes before Mr. Hittinger came out of the room. His tall form seemed to be still more bent than it had been. He had evidently been shedding tears.

"Yes, and I want to be alone with you, Mr. Brady," was the reply.

Once more they were closeted in the library.

"You know that man?" the old detective then said.

"He is my twin brother whom I have long believed to be dead," was the reply.

"Ah!"

"And he tried to personate me?"

"He certainly did, Mr. Hittinger."

"As far as the wickedness of the thing is concerned, it is in no way surprising. He has been a bad man all his life. He is an ex-convict, a murderer, a thief, but—"

The banker paused.

"Well?" demanded Old King Brady after a moment.

"How did he ever learn that I was engaged in this undertaking? He must have headed off your telegram. To do that he must have known of the contents of my letter and just when it was sent. Treachery, treachery! Black treachery! Have I worked hard all these years for this? It is a poor return."

And then with sudden energy Mr. Hittinger added:

"This case must be postponed until I can bury my brother. Remain in Boston a few days. I will bear the expense. Understand, I am not absolutely penniless. The world still believes me to be worth a million. I will bear all expense."

"We will do as you wish," assented the old detective, "but surely you don't propose to remain alone in this house with your dead brother? We must at least stand by you till you can get help."

To this the old man agreed. Thus it was the Bradys who carried out his wishes. Certain persons whom the banker knew were summoned, and when matters were well started the Bradys with-

drew, and taking up their quarters at Young's Hotel in Boston, waited for a summons to begin again.

CHAPTER III.—Getting at the Facts in the Case.

The Bradys waited three days before hearing from Homer Hittinger. Meanwhile the old detective started a private inquiry about the man. Nowhere could Old King Brady get a hint or a breath of suspicion against the banker's financial standing. He began to ask himself if Mr. Hittinger might not be "a little off." But against this had to be placed what actually happened. That a plot had been concocted to trap the detectives by the dead brother there could be no doubt, for the banker himself had been caught in the net. According to what Old King Brady learned, Ralph Hittinger, the banker's only child, a young man of twenty-five, had been until recently associated with his father in the business, but his health failing, he was now supposed to be traveling in the Far West. It was the old detective's theory that the mystery was in some way connected with this young man; that his father was endeavoring to shield him. Thus the mystery remained a mystery on the third day, when Old King Brady was summoned to attend upon Mr. Hittinger at the bank, and especially asked to come along. The old detective called about ten o'clock and sent in his card. He was quickly summoned to the banker's presence. Mr. Hittinger now appeared to better advantage, less nervous, but still provokingly slow.

"Mr. Brady," he began, "I have buried my wretched brother and am now ready for business. My idea of meeting you at four o'clock in the morning on that train was to avoid all possibility of any one knowing that I had engaged your services. How miserably I failed we have seen. There is a traitor right here in my office. I have exhausted every effort to find him. Under the circumstances it seems to me that this private room is as safe a place to talk as any other, so I will explain my case right here."

"I don't know," replied the old detective. "It seems to me that you are running a risk."

"It is a risk anyway, Mr. Brady. I have an enemy. That enemy is my own son."

Old King Brady silently nodded. He had been prepared for this.

"And where is your son?" inquired the old detective.

"That I don't know," was the reply. "I have tried to shield him for his dead mother's sake. I have therefore given it out that he has gone West for his health. I have not seen him in three weeks. That he has been in touch with his uncle is now certain to my mind. My brother—also Ralph—was an expert forger. I now believe it was he who forged my name to these notes and to certain stocks and bonds which had to be endorsed before they could be sold. That he put up the job to capture me at Hightowers I consider certain. So that end of the case stands."

"And the skeleton part," said Old King Brady, anxious to bring the man to the point.

"Is this?" replied the banker. "My grandfather, who founded this business, was at the time of his death believed to be a much richer

man than proved to be the case. My father was his only son, and I must admit a man of not very great ability. Still he managed to hold his own, and to carry the business on with reasonable success. Realizing this, probably, my grandfather, who was always eccentric, made a certain clause in his will, a copy of which I will now show you." Thus saying, the banker opened his desk, and producing a typewritten paper, read from it as follows:

"Section 17. To Philip Philipson, president of the Bowdoin Bank, his heirs or assigns, I bequeath in trust a certain sealed packet. This to be retained by him during the life of my son Homer, and that of my grandson of the same name, unless applied for either by said Homer, Sr., or Homer, Jr., under the following conditions, in which case it is to be given into the hands of the applicant.

"Conditions: Should the applicant be able to definitely prove that the Hittinger fortune has been lost that the business is on the verge of ruin, that poverty and disgrace stares my son or grandson in the face, then shall the packet be surrendered to the person applying.

"Memorandum: Should the packet remain unclaimed at the death of my grandson, Homer Hittinger, Jr., the trust shall be vacated and the packet burned without examination."

"Peculiar provision," remarked Old King Brady. "Then your father never claimed the packet, and you are doing so now. Is that it?"

"That is it. I put in a claim two weeks ago."

"This Philip Philipson is dead, of course?"

"Yes. His son succeeded him as president of the Bowdoin Bank. Under promise of absolute secrecy I showed my hand to this man, and he delivered up the packet."

"Ha!" exclaimed Old King Brady. "And the result?"

"Was most unsatisfactory. The packet contained several sheets of blank paper, and one sheet upon which was written—but you shall see for yourself."

Again the banker opened his desk and took out a sheet of blue letter paper upon which was written:

"To my Son or my Grandson:

"If ruin stares you in the face, it may be averted by unearthing my skeleton, as per directions enclosed."

"John Hittinger."

"Boston, June 18, 1843."

"And there were no directions enclosed?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Absolutely none, as I tell you. Nothing but several sheets of blank paper."

"Now about your grandfather's mysterious disappearance spoken of in your letter to me?"

"It was this way. We lived on Mount Vernon street then. I was a child, a year old. My grandfather came home from the bank as usual. He ate supper and afterward said that as the evening was warm he would take a walk on the Common. This was quite his custom. He was never seen or heard of again in spite of every effort made by my father to learn his fate. In due time he was declared legally dead, and my father inherited his estate."

"That is all there is to the story?"

"That is all."

"Then let us return to those blank sheets. There is no possibility of recovering them?"

"None. My waste paper basket is emptied every day. But why do you so dwell upon this?"

"Because I cannot believe that your grandfather could have gone to all the trouble he did in the matter of that packet merely to enclose a few sheets of blank paper and that writing you have just shown me. In his day it was much the custom to write with invisible ink, which would come into view when the paper was exposed to the action of heat. Ten chances to one these supposed blank sheets contained full directions for finding the skeleton of your grandfather thus written."

Mr. Hittinger clapped his hand to his forehead.

"What a fool I have been!" he exclaimed. "Of course it must be as you say. I remember when a boy finding in a secret drawer in a desk belonging to my grandfather a bottle of just such ink. I found something else in that same drawer, too."

"What was it?"

"Speaking of this secret drawer and what I found in it?"

"Yes, yes."

The banker opened his desk, took from it another letter, and laid it in Old King Brady's hands without a word. Opening it, the old detective found it was a letter which read as follows:

Boston, June 28, 1843.

"Captain—I write to remind you as per promise, that to-night is to be the fatal night. Shall consequently expect you at Copton street. I am prepared to do my part if you are still of the same mind, which I hope you are not. Think twice. Life is sweet. You don't have to go on as you have been doing. What is past is past, and even you have a future before you, short though it may be. I subscribe myself what you have always called me.

"Your only true friend,

"M. Moneypenny."

"To Capt. John Hittinger."

"What is the date of your grandfather's disappearance?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Same date as the letter, June 28, 1843," was the reply.

"Has this been shown to your son?"

"Yes, he has seen it. Some years ago, however."

"Where is Copton street?"

"Over at the North End."

"Was his business always that of a banker, Mr. Hittinger?"

Over Mr. Hittinger's face a shadow flitted.

"You probe deep, Mr. Brady," he said. "Must I unearth an old family skeleton?"

"If you expect me to find the skeleton of your grandfather it is absolutely necessary that you should expose your whole hand."

"Then I must do so. No, my grandfather did not start this bank until late in life. He was originally a sea captain, then a vessel owner and merchant. The foundation of his fortune was laid in the slave trade, as many another Boston for-

tune was founded, and to go the whole figure, I must add that my father once told me that his father had the reputation of being one of the most merciless men in the business. In fact, he was regarded as a very hard man by every one, his son being no exception."

"Miserly in his habits?"

"Very. That is why I fancy that all this mystery points to hidden wealth."

"And your son knows that you feel this way?"

"He certainly does."

"The case seems plain, Mr. Hittinger. Your son is still in or near Boston. He is working to obtain this prize himself. He has a confederate here in the bank who has probably received those supposedly blank sheets. Very possibly they have already unearthed the treasure. This, of course, is mere theory. But it must be acted upon. Who is the likely man?"

"I can think of but one person—understand, I hold much the same theory—and he is Joe Dodd, our cashier. It is a fact that Ralph was very thick with him at one time, but during the last six months they scarcely spoke to each other, owing to a quarrel."

"You have always found Dodd trustworthy?"

"Oh, yes. He is a very bright proposition, too."

"Married or single?"

"Single."

"His age?"

"About thirty."

"Has he learned from you the condition of your affairs?"

"No. None of my employees have any reason to suspect so far as I am concerned."

"Can you make an excuse to call him in here? Don't introduce me. Just call him in so that I may get a look at him."

It was done. Cashier Dodd came and went.

"Well?" demanded Mr. Hittinger as soon as the door closed upon him.

"A man not to be trusted. Certainly a hypocrite; probably a cold-blooded scoundrel," Old King Brady replied.

"It is hard to believe it, but I place great reliance on your judgment. What is to be done?"

"Give me that Moneypenny letter and I will get right to work. Meanwhile do you go on just as you are doing. Say nothing, do nothing, but take care of yourself. Where are you living and how?"

"In my house on Beacon street."

"Go at once to a hotel and do not return to your house until this case is concluded. Above all avoid Hightowers. Give them no chance to kidnap you."

"It is hard to believe that my own son—".

"You must believe it in the light of the experience you have had. I am leaving you now. Beware! I consider you in the greatest danger. My advice would be that you at once leave Boston and communicate with no one, but I suppose that cannot be."

"Not unless I want to bring matters to a head and see this bank close its doors before the end of the week."

"That must not be, so, again, I say, beware!"

And with this repeated caution, Old King Brady left the bank.

CHAPTER IV.—The House of the Hundred Traps.

That day at dinner at Young's Hotel, the Bradys held a close conference on the Hittinger case. The result was that Harry was assigned to the man Dodd, Old King Brady undertook to work up the ancient clew, while Alice had no part assigned to her for there seemed nothing for her to do. She, therefore, decided to work with Harry, who proposed to shadow the cashier after business hours.

In order to better adapt herself to this work, Alice assumed male disguise, in which she is simply perfect. Together, she and Harry visited the bank on a trumped-up errand, which brought them in momentary contact with Joe Dodd and enabled them to fix his face in their minds. Returning to their costumer's then, they once more altered their appearance and were ready for business at the end of the day.

But during the afternoon they were by no means idle. This time was devoted to looking up Dodd's record and they learned that the man lived in furnished rooms on Pembroke street; that he was active in a certain church, being a member of the choir; that he was greatly given to ladies' society and was as much admired by the female members of the congregation as he was disliked by their husbands and brothers.

At four o'clock, Harry and Alice were on hand at Hittinger's bank, in a cab, having ascertained that at this hour Joe Dodd usually left. They had not long to wait before their man emerged from the State street building, faultlessly dressed and looking the picture of prosperity. The driver of the cab was himself a detective, engaged by Harry from a well-known bureau, and this because it seemed desirable that he and Alice should remain in the cab, keeping out of sight as long as possible. The chase began in such fashion as to make it look as if it was likely to prove a long one. For Dodd, after stopping in one or two cafes, went home, and by eight o'clock had not left the house.

It was shortly after eight when Dodd appeared. He now wore a long overcoat, with the collar turned up about his ears, and a low, slouch hat pulled down over his eyes, which certainly looked like an attempt to disguise. Encouraged by this, Harry quickly sought the cab.

"Keep a sharp lookout," he said to the driver. "He's coming now and from the way he is dressed I imagine there may be something doing."

He said the same thing to Alice when he got inside the cab.

"It is to be hoped there is something doing, then," said Alice, "for I am heartily tired of doing nothing, and am almost frozen as well."

Whether their man was proceeding on foot or had boarded a car they did not certainly know, but they felt every confidence in the driver. At last they found themselves on Haymarket square, where the cab suddenly turned and passed down Salem street.

"North End," said Harry. "It looks like business. Surely no ordinary matter can have brought a man of Joe Dodd's associations down

into this section on a night like this. I am most curious to see where it is all going to end."

At last, however, the cab pulled up with a jerk and the detective-driver gave a whistle. It was a signal for Harry to get out.

"Well, Brady, I've treed your man at last," the detective remarked with a satisfied air.

"Good enough!" replied Harry. "You have had a lot of trouble about it?"

"You bet I have. He was in two cars. I had all I could do to keep up."

"Yes, I noticed that, but he did not stay long in either."

"No; the rest was not so bad, but when we got down here in the North End I expected every minute to see him dodge down some alley. However, I have landed him, as I said. He went into the house of a hundred traps."

"Come, that's a new one on me, and I thought I knew my Boston."

"General hold-out for crooks. Run as a lodging house by an old woman named Minch—Mother Minch they call her."

"Why the name?"

"Dates back before my time. I never worked the house. Used to be run by a noted crimp, I am told. Great place for stowing away shanghaied sailors back in the old days. I suppose the name originated then. But go around the corner and I'll point the house out to you. Shall you want me any more to-night, think?"

Harry reflected a minute and then replied that he thought not. The cab departed, and Harry and Alice, crossing the street, stood for a moment taking in the house. It was a large, square, brick structure, three stories high, and evidently very old. There was a dirty saloon on the first floor on one side of the main entrance and a junk shop on the other side. Lights twinkled in nearly every window overhead.

"I really don't see what we can do," observed Alice. "That house would harbor a hundred people. Of course, we can't get a look inside the rooms. It seems to me as if we had come to the end of our rope for the present."

"I hate to think so," replied Harry, "and yet it does look that way. If we only knew which room the man was in there might be something doing."

They took their station in the alley and waited. Again and again Harry felt that they might as well give it up, but still something seemed to compel him to hold on, and at length he was rewarded by seeing his man emerge from the dark doorway through which many people had passed in and out. He was now even more roughly dressed and being a stout, coarse-looking man naturally, he seemed to perfectly fit the neighborhood in which he found himself.

"On the trail," said Alice. "There he is."

"Sure?"

"Certain."

"All the same, he looks different."

"I know it, but he is Dodd all right. Don't hesitate, Harry, if you expect to do business."

They followed on. Presently the cashier turned into Salutation street; a moment later he was crossing Commercial street and passed on to the water edge.

"He's going down on that wharf," said Harry. "No use to try to follow him there. He will catch on to us sure."

They lost sight of their man, owing to obstructions on the wharf. It was impossible to tell whether he went on board a steamer or not. Another wait followed. Dull, cold work it was, too. It was now nearly ten o'clock and Harry again seriously thought of giving up on Alice's account, when suddenly Cashier Dodd again appeared coming down the wharf, accompanied by a young man of seedy appearance, who was evidently somewhat under the influence of liquor.

"Ralph Hittinger?" questioned Alice.

"Hard to say," replied Harry. "You know, the governor tried to get a photograph of him, but failed. The young rascal had taken the pains to destroy every photograph of himself in his father's possession, so all the detective could get was a description of Ralph Hittinger."

As Harry looked over Dodd's companion, this hardly seemed to fill the bill. Again the detectives took up the trail. It soon became evident that the two men were heading for the house of the hundred traps. So sure was he of this that Harry decided that they should take a short cut through an alley and head them off. He was right. Again on the watch, Harry and Alice saw the pair enter the same dark doorway.

"Stay here, Alice," said Harry. "I'll be right back."

He slid across the street and was quick enough to fall in behind Dodd and his companion as they started up the stairs. Alice waited impatiently, by no means satisfied to have Harry take the risk alone. He returned in a minute, however, and with an expression of satisfaction upon his face.

"Well?" demanded Alice.

"Oh, I followed them to a room. I have located them."

"Good! If it will do us any good, though I must confess I don't see just what good it can do."

"Oh, I don't know. The next room is to rent. There is a bill on the door."

"That sounds better. Going to make a try for it?"

"What do you say?"

"Yes, decidedly. There may be some chance for us if we can get into the next room."

They crossed the street and ascended the stairs.

"The bill says apply at Room 5 wherever that is, Harry remarked.

They located it at the end of the hall, which was dimly lighted by a solitary flickering gas-jet. Harry knocked and was told to come in. Seated in a big rocking chair was an immensely fat woman, with a cat in her lap. Her marked German features made it seem probable that she was the landlady, Mrs. Minch.

"You are Mrs. Minch?"

"Yah."

"We want to hire a room for a week or so. What's the price?"

"Zwei tollar."

"For both of us?"

"Zwei tollar. It don't vas not'ing to me how many goes in de room."

"Then show it to us, please."

"Dere's de key hanging py dot board. I got

de rheumatics, I can't walk no good. Tage de key und look at de room for your ownself."

"It is furnished, I suppose?"

"Sure it was furnished. You t'ink I ask you to sleep mit de bare floor?"

Harry took the key labeled 22 down from the key-board and he and Alice started upstairs to examine the room.

CHAPTER V.—Old Matt Moneypenny.

Old King Brady really had no fixed idea as to what he ought to do to make a beginning in the work on his part of the strange case which he had undertaken. Here he was proposing to take up the trail of a man who vanished sixty-five years before. The situation seemed hopeless enough. Yet there was one certain point and one possible chance which seemed to demand full consideration. The point was this:

If Mr. Hittinger, the elder—Captain Hittinger we will call him for convenience, since a captain he actually was, had been in the habit of going to some particular house on Copton street, then there must have been people at the time aware of that fact. The possibility was of some aged person being still alive and in the neighborhood who remembered these visits.

The first thing was to locate Copton street, which was easily done by aid of a man. Directly after dinner, Old King Brady went to Copton street and walked its length. On either side were old flat-front brick houses, with steep slate roofs. A glance showed that every house on the street dated back more than sixty-five years.

But to which of these houses did Captain Hittinger go on that fatal night? This was a question to which Old King Brady scarcely expected to obtain an answer. Still there is nothing like trying, and he went right at it. These houses were now, save one exception, all tenements or sailors' lodging houses. The one exception was No. 13. This house stood with closed door and blinds on its dirty front. That it had once been a sailors' retreat was evidenced by a weather-beaten sign which extended entirely across its front.

On this sign, which bore but few vestiges of paint, Old King Brady was just able to make out the words:

"Mariners' Return."

The old detective drifted into a junk shop in a basement further up the street. Looking down the cellar stairs he saw an old man pottering about, so he descended and put the question:

"Friend, have you been doing business here for a good many years?"

"Forty-three. Why?" retorted the junk dealer, surveying Old King Brady with the air of curiosity usually displayed by those who see him for the first time.

"I am trying to find out where a party named Moneypenny formerly lived."

"I don't know where he formerly lived, and I don't believe there is any one alive who does, but I know where he lives now—sometimes."

"What!" cried the old detective. "You don't mean to tell me that the man is still alive?"

"He told me some time ago that he was ninety-five, but you'll find him spry."

"Then he is just the man I want to see. Which is his house?"

"Three doors below."

"Oh, the house where the old sign is?"

"Yes, 'Mariners' Return.'"

"You say he lives there sometimes. Then he must live somewhere else at other times."

"Do you mean to say he lives all alone in that house?"

"That's just what I mean. Catch old Mat keeping a servant! He's too blamed stingy!"

"What does the old man live on?"

"Why, his rents, to be sure. He owns half the houses in this street."

"Did you ever hear of a man named Captain Hittinger, who lived around here years ago?" pressed the old detective, feeling that having made such astonishing progress there was a chance of going a step further.

But no! The junk dealer knew no one of the name of Hittinger. The old detective now went to the Moneypenny house and rang the bell several times, receiving no answer. His action attracted considerable attention, and children began to gather.

It seemed a good time to pull out, and Old King Brady departed out of Copton street, at once pleased and disappointed, for he would have liked to follow the matter up further. But if the man was alive, then there must be some one in the neighborhood who knew him better than the junk-man did, it would seem. Old King Brady walked along Commercial street until he struck a sign which he scarcely expected to meet with in such a neighborhood. This was a real estate man's.

The name was Bradshaw. The front was neatly painted and a big safe could be seen through the window, all of which seemed to indicate that Mr. Bradshaw might be a collector of rents, perhaps for the owners of some of the valuable wharf and warehouse property in the neighborhood.

It seemed probable that such a man might know old Matthew Moneypenny, so Old King Brady opened the door and walked in, to find Mr. Bradshaw seated at his desk. The detective at once made himself known.

"I am working up a case which requires me to find out about certain matters which happened many years ago," he explained. "I have been referred to an old man by the name of Moneypenny, who owns much property on Copton street. Do you know him?"

"Very well," replied Mr. Bradshaw. "He often comes in here and uses my desk while he is collecting his rents. Sometimes, but not very often of late years, I have carried money over night for him in my safe."

"Can you give me his permanent address?"

"Singularly enough, I can't, Mr. Brady. That is something he will never tell. His mail comes here. I have repeatedly asked him where he lives and how I shall get letters to him in case he don't turn up, but he never would give me any satisfaction. He is a very singular man."

"So it would seem. Does he have much correspondence?"

"Scarcely any. What little there is concerns

his real estate, I presume. He owns a lot of it, and it is all unmortgaged. I have tried repeatedly to buy him out, but he won't sell."

"Is the property very valuable?"

"I should say it was. Copton street is a private way. If my backers ever get hold of it they will pull everything out, close the street and put up a row of warehouses. We already own everything which Moneypenny does not, so you see we have got a foothold."

Now here was a chance to advance a step further.

"Then probably you have searched the titles and in looking up the records have learned who Moneypenny bought his property of," the old detective observed.

"Certainly," replied Mr. Bradshaw. "I know all about it. He bought that property of one Captain John Hittinger, who has been dead many years."

"I have heard of the man. Disappeared mysteriously, did he not?"

"Don't know. He pegged out long before my time. I never looked up his record. I have heard my father say that Moneypenny formerly ran a sailors' boarding house and made a great deal of money, especially during the Civil War. The old gentleman regarded him as an out and out crook, but all that, of course, is long ago."

"The mystery about the man would seem to bear your father's opinion out," observed Old King Brady, adding:

"But it seems provoking when I had no hope of finding this man still alive that he does live and I can't locate him."

"That would seem to offer a good field of detective work," replied the real estate dealer, with a smile.

Old King Brady thought so, too, but the question was how to begin. He now walked around the block to see if there was any way of attacking the closed-up house from the rear. And this brought the old detective up against the house of the hundred traps, although he did not know it by that name. Pacing off his distances, Old King Brady now perceived that this ancient structure must stand almost in the rear of old Moneypenny's house.

He tried several other persons in the neighborhood. Some knew the old man, others did not. Nobody knew where he kept himself when not staying at the Copton street house. Having consumed almost all the afternoon in these inquiries, Old King Brady returned to his hotel, feeling hopeful, for he had made a start at least. Of course, the first thing he did was to consult a directory in the hope of getting the desired address. Sure enough, Matthew Moneypenny's name was in the directory.

His occupation was given as "retired capitalist," while the address was down as Copton street. After supper, Old King Brady tackled the problem again. Copton street was revisited. The Moneypenny house was dark as before. Several pulls at the bell brought no response, so Old King Brady again went around the corner and entered the house of a hundred traps. But this time there were people hanging about the hall who eyed him curiously, so he turned away and hung about the neighborhood, watching his chance.

It was an hour before he got it. Then he was able to slip through into the back yard, unseen. There was nobody in the yard. So up went Old King Brady's foot and a board in that high fence was loosened from its hold below. By pushing the board inward, Old King Brady was able to crawl through into the yard of the closed house.

CHAPTER VI.—Trapping a Murderer.

Harry and Alice found Room 22 much larger than they expected. But what interested them most was the fact that there was a door connecting with the next room, in which they could hear voices. Harry put his ear to the keyhole and found that he could easily hear what was being said.

"Get on the job, Alice," he whispered. "I'll go down to Mother Minch and engage the room."

He did so, and speedily returned. Alice was sitting by the table.

"What's the matter?" asked Harry. "Is there nothing to do, then?"

"Not just now."

"Have they gone out?"

"Dodd has; the other one, whoever he is, has taken to the bed. Dodd told him he was too drunk to talk business, and that he better lie down and sleep it off; that he, Dodd, was going out for a while and would be in later."

A long, dull wait followed. It was nearly midnight before they heard some one stop outside the door of the next room, although all the evening there had been people coming and going on the stairs. There seemed to be two, and they spoke in whispers when they first entered the room, but raised their voices as the talk proceeded. Harry at once got "on the job" at the keyhole.

"He seems to be dead to the world," he heard one remark.

"Yes," replied the voice of Dodd, "and that's the way we want it. You are sure this is the room?"

"Of course. I don't make mistakes. Are you still determined to do it?"

"I am. We must do it. But don't talk too loud. I heard people in the next room a while ago. I think Mother Minch has rented it."

"I don't see any light through the keyhole."

Harry congratulated himself upon having turned the light out as soon as he heard the pair stop outside the door.

"It's a blame pity Ralph Hittinger had to die," remarked Dodd's companion. "That has twisted everything. If we only could have passed the old man off for his brother all would have been well."

"That was your idea and his. I never had much faith in it. My idea from the first was that we ought to put Homer Hittinger out of business and then run Ralph forward."

"If you knew Ralph as well as I do you would realize the hopelessness of it. He is the crankiest proposition ever. Loaded to the eyes all the time, too."

"Have you put it up to him yet?"

"No, I haven't. What's the use? We can't locate the will. Nothing will come of it till we do."

"Do you think the old man has any real clue?"

"You know what I told you he wrote to Old King Brady. I suppose you haven't forgotten that I managed to get a look at that letter?"

"Why, of course not, Dodd. Why should I forget a thing like that? Are the Bradys working on the case?"

"I assume they are. Old King Brady was in the office to-day."

"You haven't seen anything of him around here, nor on Copton street to-night?"

"No."

"If we could only find old man Moneypenny all would be easy."

"I stick to my theory that he lives in some old man's home, under another name."

"As you know, I have tried every house in the city without success. That he lives under a false name is likely enough. If we would only wait we could catch him at the Copton street house some night. But it can't be done. The first of those notes will be due in a week. Homer Hittinger can never meet it. If it is not met the business goes to smash. If we can push this thing through, cover those notes, do away with Hittinger, Senior, and put Ralph in his place, then, we have got a banking business good for \$20,000 a year, managed by live hands."

"Yours for instance."

"Yes, mine, for instance. I know my business, and don't you forget it."

The voices ceased. Harry remained listening at the keyhole. Dodd and his companion could be heard moving about. Only a few fragmentary sentences were caught now.

"Is that the trap?"

"Never would have thought——"

"How sound he sleeps!"

"Up with him!"

"No, no! Don't close it!"

So surely as this was the house of the hundred traps, had one of those traps been sprung upon Ralph Hittinger now? Harry pulled away and hastily gave Alice a general idea of what he had overheard.

"I am going to try to open that door," he hurriedly said: "We want to know more about this trap."

There was no difficulty. Harry quickly found a key on his bunch of skeletons which filled the bill, and the door was cautiously drawn back. There was nobody in the room. Alongside the chimney a secret panel stood open. Young King Brady flashed his light inside and saw that the wall of the room was a false one. Beyond was a narrow passage and beyond that the true wall of the house. There was no stairs nor ladder, so far as Harry could see.

"Alice, ten to one there is a similar panel in our room," Harry whispered. "In every room on this side of the hall, like enough."

He drew back, closed the door and locked it. A hasty search for a secret panel was crowned with success.

"We seem to be in it," said Alice.

"Right in it," Harry replied. "Shall we follow the thing up?"

"If you say so."

"I do say so, but we don't want to get you into trouble."

"Never mind me. I'm equal to any old thing, as you may well know."

"Too equal—too rash."

"Never mind, Harry. That's all right, too. I know another party who has got himself into trouble through his rashness more than once. But you are the boss. Have it your own way."

"Come on," said Harry, stepping into the passage and throwing the light of his electric flash lamp ahead of him. He led on towards the front of the building, developing nothing except the fact that there was a secret panel to every room just as he had supposed.

"Back track," he muttered, and they returned.

Close to the rear wall they found what they were looking for—a secret staircase leading down.

"Well named the house of the hundred traps," muttered Harry when, having descended to the level of the next floor, they came upon a similar passage.

And here again there was a secret panel opening from every room. The stairs continued. Harry and Alice followed them down below the level of the cellar, where they brought up against two iron doors set in a brick wall at abrupt angles. Both doors appeared to be locked. The keyholes were large; the doors appeared to be very old.

"Which way they went is the question," observed Alice; "if we go on we are liable to run up against them."

"Which I don't care to do until the case develops further, I must confess," said Harry, "but all the same, we must take our chances, for I am not calling a halt now."

He got out his skeleton keys and tried the left-hand door, soon finding a key which would take the lock. Behind this door was an arched passage, built of brick, leading off into the darkness. It was damp and foul-smelling, yet there was nothing to indicate that it had ever been a sewer. Listening, they could hear no sound. Harry got out his compass and ascertained that the passage ran in the direction of Commercial street and the water front. He tried the key in the other door, but it did not work. They hurried on. The passage held its level.

"What this ever could have been built for is a mystery," murmured Harry, "but it certainly is very old."

This was proved in a minute, when they came upon a block of marble, set in the brick. Upon this block, deeply cut, was:

"H. H. T., 170."

"There you are!" cried Alice. "Mystery!"

"Yes, and one which probably will never be solved," replied Harry. "An elegant place this for disposing of any unfortunate sailors who may have been knocked over the head for their money in the house of the hundred traps. But, hark! What is that?"

"Fighting!" cried Alice.

"That's what!"

The sound of a struggle was plainly to be heard.

"You black traitor!" a voice shouted. "Take that!"

Whack! Whack!

Then came a shot, followed by a piercing cry.

"We want to get back out of this," said Harry,

hastily, "we can do better business at the foot of the stairs."

He caught Alice by the arm and hurried her back. Before they reached the door they could hear footsteps running their way.

"Hold on, there!" a voice shouted. "Hold on, whoever you are, or I'll make it warm for you!"

"He sees our light!" breathed Alice.

"One moment and we shall be safe," replied Harry.

They dodged through the door, closed and locked it.

"Leave your skeleton in the lock, then he can't open it," suggested Alice. "We shall have him penned."

"Good suggestion. It will give us time to think, anyway."

"Which one do you suppose it is? Dodd or the other fellow?"

"How can I possibly tell? But from what I overheard, I should imagine it was the other fellow. He was for grasping the buried treasure, Dodd for using it to lift the forged notes and getting control of the banking business."

"That's so! Hush! He is at the door."

Somebody was fumbling at the lock with a key. Of course, the presence of the skeleton prevented him from inserting the key. They could hear the man swearing behind the door.

"Hello!" he suddenly shouted. "Hello! Who are you, out there?"

"Don't answer," breathed Harry. "Let him stew a while."

The call was several times repeated. Then the prisoner seemed to become convinced that whoever had hemmed him in was gone and he began to swear.

"Heavens! Am I to be penned in this horrible place with his corpse!" they heard him say.

The voice did not sound to Harry like Dodd's.

"He has murdered Dodd," he whispered. "I believe I will get him out, Alice. We ought to be good for him."

"I am afraid he will put up a desperate fight, Harry. We may have to kill him. Better get a policeman."

"But we are two to one, Alice."

"No, three to one," spoke a deep voice behind them.

Both turned quickly. The other iron door stood open, but they could see no one in the darkness of the passage beyond.

CHAPTER VII.—All Kinds of Strange Happenings.

Old King Brady, having kicked his way through the fence into old Matt Moneypenny's back yard, stopped to look around. It was not an ordinary back yard, for it was paved with flagstones, something common enough in New York, but seldom seen in Boston. The whole of the small space was not covered, for the yard was of no great depth. The old detective had now got into just the situation he wanted. There was the back door of the closed house standing invitingly before him. Locked it was, of course, but if it was not bolted there ought not to be any great difficulty in

getting it open by aid of his skeleton keys, the old detective thought, and he went right for it. But it was only to discover very quickly that the door certainly was bolted. There was light enough thrown into the yard from the rear windows of the houses around to make it easy to get along without using the flashlight, and the old detective, resolved not to give up, now tackled the windows, which were concealed behind heavy wooden shutters. There was nothing doing, however. The shutters appeared to be bolted, like the door. As for the windows on the floor above, there was no possible way of getting at them. It looked very much like a clean knock-out, when something prompted the old detective to make another and closer examination of the door. Now, it is doubtful if another man—another detective even—would have made the discovery Old King Brady did. He, however, had seen such doors before, hence it is not altogether strange that he should suddenly catch on to the fact that this whole door frame and all was not attached to the brick work. He examined it top and bottom and on both sides. The door was certainly detached everywhere. Remembering that he had to do with the back door of a crimp's house, this gave Old King Brady his cue.

"Can this be one of those doors which open with a secret spring, even when locked and bolted?" he muttered. "Upon my word, it looks that way."

Now, at the risk of attracting attention, he got out his flashlight and followed the brickwork all around. Presently his eyes lighted upon half a brick, close to the casement, in which a rusted ring had been set with lead. That the ring was old was to be seen at a glance. Old King Brady pulled on it. The ring did not move, but the brick did. Old King Brady, by working it a bit was able to pull it out. The brick proved to be hollow and the hollow fitted over another iron ring.

Again Old King Brady pulled, but there was nothing doing. He pushed with the same result.

Not discouraged, he pulled on the ring, sideways. It resisted at first, but there was a certain movement which encouraged the old detective to exert greater strength. Suddenly the ring slipped up against the brick on the right with a click. Old King Brady pushed on the door. The whole business, casement and all, swung inward.

The way into the closed house was now clear.

"Well, upon my word, this is a great arrangement," thought the old detective.

He examined the door on the inside and finding that it opened as freely from that direction as the other, he closed it and began his examination of old Matt Moneypenny's house. And a singular place it was. Old King Brady began to consider this one of the strangest cases he had ever tackled. For this house remained practically as it must have been years before, when it was conducted as a sailor's lodging house. One room on the ground floor was fitted up as a barroom.

There were barrels of rum and gin, casks of brandy, bottles of the same behind a little bar, quaint pictures on the walls of old clipper ships and supposedly beautiful women, with chairs and tables standing about upon the sanded floor. That no use had been made of the place in many years

was proved by immense accumulation of cobwebs and the mountains of dust which lay everywhere.

Opening from this room one way was a kitchen which showed signs of recent use. The other way—towards the front—there was a larger room, which appeared to have been a sitting-room for the sailors. Here there were more pictures. On one side was a sack which held piles of newspapers. Old King Brady examined the dates. The latest he could find was 1868. This room was tolerably free from dust. In one corner was a desk and chair. There were old account-books in the desk and from several things Old King Brady found there he felt certain that old Matt Moneypenny must make use of the desk whenever he came to the house. And it was in this desk—in a drawer—that Old King Brady made a discovery which led him to hope that he was going to be able to locate the old man in his other home.

For from this drawer he fished out a picture postal, quite modern. It represented a quaint little cottage on the seashore—a mere doll's house, in fact—in front a fence extended and at the gate stood an aged man with snowwhite hair. Under the picture was printed:

"The Hermit of Haddon Beach."

"Old Moneypenny, surest thing!" muttered the detective. "This is a genuine stroke of luck."

He carefully pocketed the picture postal and started upstairs. Where Haddon Beach was he did not know, but it was something easily to be ascertained. Upstairs the floors were divided into many small rooms, evidently for the accommodation of sailors. All these rooms, save one, were loaded with dust, the bed in most instances remaining just as the last occupant had left it. One room showed signs of care, and the old detective concluded that it must be the one which old Matt Moneypenny used for himself when in the house. Old King Brady was now about to give it up when he suddenly stumbled upon the discovery that the house contained a back staircase, which, while it could scarcely be called secret, still was manifestly not intended for everybody's use since it opened off from a closet by a door which had no knob and was controlled by a similar arrangement to that of the back door below. Of course, this required exploration. Old King Brady promptly descended those stairs and in doing so made the discovery that on many of the treads were dark stains, evidently blood.

"This joint has been a bad place in its day, I'm afraid," muttered the old detective.

The stairs ended in a walled-up room in the cellar, which had no visible door or window. Here there was a huge boiler with a firebox underneath it. On a bench many tools lay scattered about. As for blood stains, the floor was covered with them—great splashes. The place smelled horribly and seemed not to have been aired in years. Old King Brady shuddered as he looked around. It seemed to him as if some wicked influence hung over this room.

"Did they cut up the people they murdered in this horrible house here in this room and boil them down for their bones?" he asked himself.

Once the old detective had unearthed a similar shop under the house of a crazy druggist in Chicago—a veritable skeleton factory. It looked to

him, as he flashed his light about, as if this room might once have been put to a similar use. But the strangest part of it all was that so many years had elapsed and yet conditions in this house remained unchanged. And now came still another discovery. Satisfied that there must be some other way of getting out of this infernal kitchen, except by the back stairs, the old detective looked for a secret door and found one. It was an ingenious contrivance and could not have been easily discovered by anybody but an expert. The door opened directly upon a flight of stone steps, which descended in the direction of the rear of the house.

"Here's my road," thought Old King Brady, and he hurried down, to find himself in a vaulted brick passage at the end.

This was quickly covered. It brought him up against an iron door. Old King Brady approached it cautiously for he could hear voices behind it. Listening closely he soon discovered that he was up against Harry and Alice.

"Bless the boy! He is getting there, too," he muttered. "So Dodd must be the traitor. Harry has tracked him here, but what lies behind this door?"

He cautiously fitted skeleton keys to the lock, thinking to surprise his partners. Now they suddenly ceased talking. Old King Brady could hear a strange voice shouting, but the sound appeared to be muffled and he was unable to make out words. Cautiously he opened the door, shutting off his flashlight as he did so. So engaged were Harry and Alice that they neither heard nor saw until Old King Brady supplemented Harry's remark by calling out, as quoted at the end of the last chapter:

"No, three to one!"

"Governor!" breathed Harry, catching sight of his chief as he came forward into the light.

"Here I am," replied the old detective. "What's up?"

Harry pointed to the other door.

"We've got him locked in," he whispered. "Speak low. I don't want him to know that there is any one here. I am afraid he has heard you, as it is."

It looked that way for the man had ceased to either call out or talk to himself now.

"Explain," said the old detective. "My story will keep."

Harry hastened to explain the situation.

"And you think he has murdered Dodd, then?" Old King Brady demanded.

"I go by what he said, as I told you," was the reply.

"We must take him, of course. Open the door."

Harry turned the key. Foolishly, as it afterward proved, he did not take it from the lock.

But there was nobody in sight.

"He must have heard you, Mr. Brady," observed Alice. "He has taken the alarm and gone back."

"Yes, but according to his own tale he can't get out," said Harry. "Shall we follow him up and try to get him?"

"He'll shoot, sure," said Old King Brady, "if we go in there, throwing our light, then we make ourselves a bright and shining mark."

"What shall we do, then?"

"Wait."

They accordingly waited in silence, keeping the

light in evidence, but standing to one side in case a shot should come. Fully fifteen minutes passed. It began to grow monotonous. Harry was expecting to get the order to advance at any moment, when all at once, from out of the darkness, a voice spoke:

"You are the Bradys, are you not?" it said.

"Yes!" cried the old detective, "we are the Bradys."

"I thought so. You are after me?"

"We are after you. Better give yourself up quietly. We are three to your one."

"I will do it. Come in and get me."

"No, you come out."

"Well, I suppose I must."

"But beware how you handle yourself. You want to throw down your revolver as soon as you come in sight of us. We stand for no funny business."

"All right. It is funny business enough for me that I should have come up against detectives of your caliber."

They could hear him walking towards them, and presently he came into full view. He was an under-sized man, rather thick-set, decidedly a tough-looking proposition. His face was deathly pale and bore a wild expression.

"Come!" called Old King Brady, "throw down your revolver."

He sprang into full view, covering the fellow as he spoke. The man drew his revolver.

"Oh, bags! What's the use?" he cried. "If I am up against the Bradys I may as well end it all."

Then, quick as a wink, he threw up the revolver and fired, seemingly at his head, just behind the left ear. With a groan the man sank to the floor of the passage and lay motionless, with eyes closed.

"Well, upon my word!" exclaimed Harry.

"Wait," said the old detective. "Careful now! It may be a trick."

It would have been better had he heeded his own warning! They presently approached the man, satisfied that he was dead. But they were speedily undeceived, for as Old King Brady bent over the supposed suicide, he was seized by the legs and thrown violently on his face. Harry tried to grapple with him as he jumped up, but was butted in the stomach and put out of business in a twinkling. He struck at Alice also, but she dodged and fired as he ran for the door. But all this was but the work of seconds, and the last of it was done in the dark, Old King Brady's flashlight being extinguished as it fell. Before either of the detectives could make a move the iron door clanged and the key was heard to turn. The Bradys were now prisoners, underground.

CHAPTER VIII.—Disappointment and Death.

The Bradys were not seriously injured. The worst was Harry, who suffered more or less pain for several days to come. But Old King Brady was badly hurt in his feelings and berated himself for a fool.

"To think that I should have been caught by

such an ancient trick after warning you two!" he growled, as he groped for his flashlight and got on his feet.

The first thing he did was to try the door. The man had not only locked it but he had been shrewd enough to leave the key in place.

"Never mind," said Old King Brady, "I can fix that all right. Let us proceed to investigate. There is time enough. He certainly won't come back again."

They now proceeded to explore the passage to its end, which proved to be a square vault with arched roof, bricked up on all sides. And here lay two men. One was Cashier Dodd, with a knife in his back. The man was dead. His pockets had all been turned inside out. Near him lay the dissipated-looking young man whom Harry and Alice had taken for Ralph Hittinger, deep in a drunken sleep. There was apparently no way of getting into the vault from above, but in the floor was a large trap door. Harry tried to raise it, but it resisted all his efforts. Old King Brady, flashing his light down, discovered a secret fastening. After this was opened the trap door came up readily enough. Water could be heard swashing below.

"This vault must be under some old warehouse on Commercial street," remarked Old King Brady. "Really, there is no telling what secrets one is going to strike when one takes up a case here in the North End."

"But why did he kill Dodd, do you suppose?" questioned Alice, with a shudder, as she glanced down at the corpse.

Old King Brady gave out his views about the so-called blank sheets of paper in the mysterious packet.

"I have as little doubt that they were written upon with invisible ink as I have that this dead man picked them out of Mr. Hittinger's wastebasket. It is the key to the whole situation, and what Harry overheard proves it."

"If you can believe what Dodd said, he was not in possession of the secret of the whereabouts of the skeleton of Captain John Hittinger," Young King Brady observed.

"But was he to be believed?" questioned the old detective. "I greatly doubt it. My opinion is that he was in possession of the secret and for reasons of his own was not ready to put it to use. The murderer must have known that he had the papers in his possession and that is why he went through his clothes. No doubt he intended to throw his body down the trap, but could not open it. However, this is all guesswork, of course."

They now turned their attention to Ralph Hittinger, and after many attempts succeeded in arousing him. He awoke fairly sober and as he staggered to his feet he stared about in stupid surprise.

"How came I here?" he murmured.

"Brought here by that man and another," replied Old King Brady, motioning to his partners to let him do the talking.

"Joe Dodd! Good heavens, some one has stabbed him in the back! He is dead!"

"As you see, young man."

"Is this your work?"

"Decidedly not. Guess again."

"I see! You are Old King Brady, the detective."

"That time you guessed right, at all events. You, I take it, are Ralph Hittinger?"

"No. My name is Brown."

"Brown, nothing! We know perfectly well who you are."

"Are you going to arrest me? I'll swear that I had nothing to do with this."

"Yes, consider yourself under arrest. We know, however, that you did not kill this man, but perhaps you may be able to help us determine who did. I am going to describe the murderer now."

"I'll tell you who he is if I recognized the description, quick enough. Joe Dodd was my friend."

Old King Brady described the man as best he could.

"I don't know him," declared Ralph, and it was easy to see that he spoke the truth.

"Come," said Old King Brady, "you may as well admit that you are Ralph Hittinger and save trouble."

But he would not admit it, and persisted in calling himself Brown.

"You will come with us," said the old detective. "In the presence of your injured father you will hardly deny your identity."

Sullenly, Ralph followed them through the passage. Old King Brady first searched him, but he carried no firearms. Arrived at the door the old detective produced a peculiar pair of nippers, with long, slim blades. With these he was able to get hold of the key and turn it straight in the lock, after which one push sent it tumbling on the floor.

Producing his own skeleton keys, then, the old detective easily opened the door and they ascended the long stairs in the house of the hundred traps, winding up at the secret panel through which Harry and Alice had passed. Fortunately, Harry had taken the pains to mark this panel so there was no question about it being the right one.

Once in the room they quickly passed into the one adjoining. That the murderer had been there and gone was evident, for the bureau drawers had been ransacked, also a grip, which presumably belonged to Dodd. The Bradys had their look, too, but they found several things which went to prove that the dead man was surely Dodd.

"We must get out of here now and take this young man to his father," remarked Old King Brady.

Ralph began to whine.

"Why don't you lock me up and be done with it?" he asked.

"Ah, I see! You don't care to face your father," said Old King Brady. "Anything but that. However, that is just what you have to do."

"And mind, now," he added, "we shall keep a sharp eye on you, so no attempt to bolt. There is lots of trouble ahead of you if you do."

At Haymarket square they were fortunate enough to get a cab. Old King Brady directed the driver to take them to the Touraine Hotel.

"But my——. Mr. Hittinger don't live at the Touraine," protested Ralph.

"Ha! So you do know Mr. Hittinger?" observed the old detective.

"I know he don't live at the Touraine," snapped

Ralph. "I don't want to see him, anyway. Take me to jail."

But to the Touraine he was taken, and Mr. Hittinger was aroused. All this had been previously provided for. In case Ralph was captured his father desired to immediately hold a private interview with him, no matter what the hour was, night or day. And now his request was granted. What passed between father and son the Bradys never knew. At the end of an hour the old detective was summoned to attend. He found Mr. Hittinger in the room alone.

"My son has gone, Mr. Brady," he said. "I could not bring myself to do otherwise. He has faithfully promised to take the first train for the Pacific Coast and to remain there for the present."

Old King Brady merely nodded. He had expected nothing else.

"Has he confessed?" he asked.

"Yes," sighed the banker. "He claims that Dodd was at the bottom of it all; that it was he who introduced him to my wretched brother, who was the forger of the notes, et cetera, just as I supposed. Now that both are dead, the game is played to a finish and I am left to right the ruin they have wrought as best I may."

"He may have told you all he knows," said Old King Brady, "but there are points he does not appear to have covered. Let me run over our work and you will see what I mean."

This he quickly did, rehearsing the conversation Harry overheard at the keyhole.

"Ralph told me practically the same thing," said the banker. "I was to be captured and put out of the way. Dodd figured upon securing the treasure and righting the business, pretending that he was acting for Ralph's benefit, but, of course, it was for his own. As for the man who murdered him, I have no idea who he can be, nor has Ralph. But it is all over, now that Dodd is dead."

"Not all over by any means if his murderer has those sheets you so foolishly threw away. That they are written on with invisible ink there can be no doubt; quite as likely that they contain the clue to the whereabouts of your grandfather's skeleton. I want those sheets, and I propose to get them, with the man. Far from being finished, I regard this strange case as but just begun."

Not now, nor in the further talk which he made, did Old King Brady say a word about his own work, nor of the remarkable discovery that Matthew Moneypenny still lived. For the old detective never exposes his hand to his clients until a case is completed, unless actually forced to do so. On the whole, he was glad to be rid of Ralph Hittinger, if he really was to be so favored. The detectives now sought their hotel for a little sleep. First thing next morning the death of Dodd was reported to the police, who visited the vault with the intention of removing the remains. They did not find the dead man, however. Fully two weeks later his body was fished out of the Charles River, so there can be little doubt that the murderer returned to the scene of his crime and threw it down the trap.

The next step was manifestly to follow up the clew of the picture postal. Old King Brady easily located Haddon Beach, which proved to be "down

Hingham way," as they say in Boston. Before going out there he visited Mr. Bradshaw, the real estate man, and showed him the card.

"That's old Moneypenny," Bradshaw instantly declared.

As this seemed to settle the question, Old King Brady at once started for Haddon Beach. The old detective called first at a livery stable, which he found open.

"The hermit," repeated the man in charge, when he put the question, "you mean old man Johnson, I suppose?"

"I mean this man," replied Old King Brady, exhibiting the picture postal.

"Yes, that's old Johnson. He lives a mile or more down the beach, in that cottage. I hardly think he is home, though. I haven't seen him in a week. He is often away for days together."

"Does he live alone in that house?"

"Yes, all alone; has for years."

"How old is he?"

"He told me he was ninety-five. He certainly looks it."

"How long has he lived there?"

"You'll have to ask an older man than me. Ever since I can remember he has been there."

"Is he supposed to be rich?"

"I should imagine that he is very poor from the way he lives, but he must have some money, for he has never done any work since I have known him, and he always pays his bills."

Having satisfied his curiosity on these points, Old King Brady started down the beach in the direction pointed out by the livery man. He soon came in sight of the cottage represented on the picture card. Old King Brady rapped on the door. No answer coming to his repeated summons, he tried the door, but found it fast. It was the same at the back, and the old detective was finally obliged to resort to his skeleton keys, with which he easily gained admittance. Passing through a little kitchen he entered a living-room. At once he saw the object of his search in an armchair before a stove in which there was no fire.

A tall man of immense age, with hair as white as snow. His head had fallen forward on his breast, his hands hung down over the arms of the chair. One glance was sufficient to show Old King Brady the true state of the case. After all, his hopes were dashed for there sat old Matt Moneypenny, dead.

CHAPTER IX.—The Bradys Discover the Well.

Clearly, the old fellow had been dead for several days. Old King Brady made a search of the premises. Upstairs but one room was furnished at all and this had evidently been the old man's bedroom. The only thing of importance which came out of this search was the discovery of a tin box in a closet. This Old King Brady opened with a key found in the dead man's pocket. It proved to contain the deeds of the Copton street houses, tax bills for same and other papers relating to the property of little consequence. The deeds covered many houses, and among them were a few on the other street, the house of the hundred traps being one of these. All these deeds bore date one week previous to the disappearance of Captain

Hittinger. Thus this singular man had conveyed all this valuable real estate to Matthew Moneypenny at that date, each deed reading:

"For the sum of one dollar and other valuable considerations."

Mr. Bradshaw told Old King Brady that Matt Moneypenny had on one occasion informed him that he had not a relative in the world.

"If Mr. Hittinger can only break these transfers he can bolster up his business all right," Old King Brady said to himself, as he locked the box which he had determined to take away with him.

But the dead man's person still remained to be thoroughly searched and disagreeable as the task seemed, Old King Brady went at it. The result was the discovery of a letter concealed in an oil silk bag which hung about the old man's neck.

This letter was addressed to "Homer Hittinger, 91 State street, Boston, Mass."

Old King Brady did not hesitate to open the letter. It was written in a cramped hand by an illiterate man, and ran thus:

"Boston, June 15, 1870.

"Sir.—i am the man yore granfather seen last the nite he dyed; I was his rite bower for many yeres. i done what he tolle me to do becoz i always obeyed him as my captain and later when we done bizness together ashore, so i don't blame myself for wot happened one bit; i am now getting old and I say to you, mister hittinger, that there is things you orter know! if you are a wise man you will break down the wall in the ole well hid under the pavement in the yard behind my house, 50 cotonin street; i don't intend you shall get this letter till i am dead. hope you get it then all rite.

Yours respectfully,

"M. Moneypenny."

"Again the well comes into the question," muttered Old King Brady, "and this time we locate it. Surely this singular letter can mean but one thing, that Captain Hittinger's skeleton is hidden there. Thanks for the clue, my ancient friend."

He now left the cottage, carrying away the box carefully wrapped, also a roll of money containing about five hundred dollars which he took from the dead man's pocket.

"I'll see him decently buried," he said to himself, "so I might as well take the money as to leave it for the next person who comes along."

Old King Brady now went directly to the livery stable and informed the proprietor of his discovery.

"I have had business with the old man," he said, "and I shall make it my business to see him buried. I am returning to Boston by the way of Hingham, and from that town I shall send an undertaker to take charge of the remains."

But this was made easier when the liveryman informed Old King Brady that he himself acted as undertaker in that section, whereupon the old detective turned the matter over to him, paying in advance. When he reached the hotel in Boston, Old King Brady found that Alice had gone to Cambridge on private business. Harry was in, however, and to him he told his story and exhibited his find. Young King Brady was greatly elated.

It was then so near noon that Old King Brady determined to wait until after dinner, thus it was two o'clock when they finally turned up at 50 Copton street. We should have mentioned that Old King Brady also took a bunch of keys from old Moneypenny's pocket, and they came handy now, for one of them proved to be the key of the front door of the closed house.

So they let themselves in and proceeded to the back yard, where they studied into the situation with particular care. There seemed to be little doubt that the well lay under the stones in the northeast corner of the yard. The detectives sounded the pavement all over. At this point, when they struck upon it, a hollow sound was returned.

"We need a mason here," said Old King Brady. "I'll step around to Mr. Bradshaw's and see if he knows of one in the neighborhood, meanwhile you can take a look over the house."

Mr. Bradshaw was in, and he listened with interest to Old King Brady's story of his discovery.

"So the old boy is dead!" he remarked. "Wonder who gets all his property?"

Old King Brady now spoke of the mason. The real estate dealer's curiosity was aroused, and he began to ask questions, but Old King Brady managed to head him off and left with the address of one, Joseph Lorimer, a stonemason nearby.

He hurried to the place, finding a little office at the end of a yard and Mr. Lorimer in it. He was a rough-looking fellow, and there was something about his face which seemed slightly familiar.

"Do you know Mr. Moneypenny, of 50 Copton street?" he asked.

"I do," replied Lorimer, shortly. "He seemed particularly reticent and gruff.

"He is dead. I—"

"Is, eh? About time," broke in the mason. "He was that mean I thought he would live to be a hundred, just to spite those who come in for his property, whoever they are."

"I was going to say that I am acting for the police," continued Old King Brady, displaying his shield. "It is necessary to open up an old well in the back yard for certain reasons. If you can let me have a man to do it right now I will pay you well, for there is some hurry about the matter."

"I'll go myself," said the mason.

"All right," said Old King Brady.

And Old King Brady left, not at all sure that the man meant to come, after all. He found Harry in the front hall when he let himself in at the door of 50 Copton street.

"Well, did you get your mason?" the younger detective asked.

"I suppose I did," replied Old King Brady, "but the fellow is such a cranky proposition that I don't feel altogether sure that he means to come. What about yourself? Did you find anything new?"

"No, I don't suppose I have. I didn't strike anything of importance that you haven't mentioned."

They waited, and after a while Lorimer came, with pick, shovel and crowbar. He was dressed in working clothes now and looked even rougher than before. Old King Brady led the way to the back yard and pointed out the place where he sup-

posed the well to be. Lorimer sounded the stone with his crowbar.

"You are right," he said. "It is hollow under here."

"Then go at it and raise the stones," ordered Old King Brady.

He turned away and followed Harry into the house, for the latter had informed him by a secret sign that he wanted to speak to him.

"What is it?" Old King Brady asked, as he stepped inside.

"Why, governor, that fellow looks amazingly like the man we had the run in with last night," whispered Harry.

"There!" exclaimed Old King Brady, "now I know what made me feel that I had seen him before. You are right. Do you consider him the same man?"

"Well, I wouldn't want to swear to it, but he certainly looks like him."

"Nor would I want to swear to it. The fact is, at no time did I get a good look at the fellow."

"Same here. We ought to be on our guard."

"We must, and will be. But say nothing now. Since we have begun with him we may as well go ahead to a finish."

They returned to the yard where the mason was struggling with one of the flagstones, which he presently succeeded in raising.

"I think I am mistaken," Harry found opportunity to whisper. "Now that I come to look him over he does not impress me as being the man."

"We will keep a sharp watch out," was the reply, and they stepped closer to see what the mason had unearthed.

There was just soil below the stone. Lorimer got busy with his shovel, working in silence. The coating of earth was not more than three inches deep; it proved to rest upon boards.

"There you are! This is your well," Lorimer observed, adding:

"But I'll be blamed if I see how you expect to get down there without a ladder."

"Leave that to me," replied Old King Brady. "A ladder shall be provided."

The fact was, Old King Brady carried in one of the many pockets of that remarkable blue coat a ladder made of the finest twine, yet so strong as to be capable of bearing the weight of any ordinary man. This he usually carries with him. Many is the time it has proved to be of the greatest service in his detective work.

One stone removed, it was an easy matter to remove the others. The mason shoveled away the earth, revealing a circular lid with a ring attached. The boards were so rotten that they almost went to pieces when he raised it. And now a circular hole, some thirty feet deep, stoned up on all sides, was revealed.

The Bradys' strangest case was advancing. They had found the well. But was this important discovery going to lead to the further discovery of the skeleton of Homer Hittinger's missing grandfather? That remained to be seen.

CHAPTER X.—Walled Up In the Well.

"There's your ladder, my friend. I told you it would be provided."

It was Old King Brady who said it. He pointed

down into the well. There, sure enough, rested a ladder leading down. If the Bradys' conclusions were correct, then it must be at least sixty-five years old, still it seemed to be sound.

"Wet or dry, that's the question?" said Harry, peering down into the hole, which was decidedly dark.

"Dry," replied Lorrimer adding:

"And now, gentlemen, is there anything more I can do for you?"

"Why, yes," said Old King Brady. "Now I want you to open up one side of the well."

"What for?"

"Well, now, that remains to be seen. If you discover what I expect then you will know all about it; if not, then you don't have to know."

"Huh!" grunted the mason. "We shall want a lantern."

"I saw one in the kitchen, Harry. You go in and get it," Old King Brady replied.

Harry quickly returned with the lantern, which proved to be full of oil. Lorrimer took it and gingerly descended the ladder, testing each round as he went down.

"Well, how do you find it?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Pretty shaky. Still, if it will bear me it will bear you, I suppose."

The old detective followed him down. Not only was there no water in the well, but there was no sign that there ever had been any. It did not seem to Old King Brady that the hole was deep enough for a well. That seemed to argue that it had been constructed for some special purpose.

All curiosity himself, now, the old detective ordered Lorrimer to go ahead and break through the side of the wall indicated in old Matt Money-penny's letter which he had carried around his neck for so many years. The mason went right at it with his pick. The lantern was placed on the floor of the well. Indeed, it was hardly needed, for sufficient sunlight came down from above. It was a tough job getting the stones started.

"If you could drive an iron rod in between two stones and then pull it out suddenly probably one of the stones would come with it," Old King Brady observed.

"Good enough idea, but where are we to get the rod?" growled the mason.

"Harry," said Old King Brady, whose fears were now almost forgotten in the interest he felt, "you know the room where that boiler is?"

"Yes."

"Well, I had in mind when I spoke such a rod that I saw there. Go and get it, please. It won't take a minute; the experiment is worth trying."

Young King Brady accordingly left the well. Lorrimer toiled on with dogged persistency. He did not seem to take much stock in the rod scheme.

"I'll have the stone started before he can get back," he declared.

But Harry's voice was heard calling that he could not find the rod, when some stones fell out of the side of the well, revealing a human skeleton. Then the worker turned, dropped his pick, leaped up in the air and gripped Old King Brady by the throat while Harry was descending the ladder. What ailed the man?

He acted like one who had suddenly gone mad. The agility he displayed was wonderful. His weight thrown full on the old detective bore him back against the other wall; his head struck the stones with crushing force. With the mason on top of him, Old King Brady landed at the bottom of the well, half unconscious.

Nor was Harry in shape to help him. For at the very moment of the attack Young King Brady started to draw his revolver. This probably threw his weight heavier on the round upon which he was standing. It broke. Harry, losing his balance, fell headlong, striking his forehead upon one of the fallen stones. It seemed like fate.

Not entirely did Old King Brady lose consciousness, but Harry was completely stunned. This passed in a minute, and Young King Brady revived. The old detective was bending over him.

"Thank heaven you are coming out of it all right, my dear boy!" he said. "I need your help if ever I did. We are in a pretty pickle now."

Harry saw that it was dark, save for the light of the lantern. He looked for the ladder. It was gone!

"What on earth!" he exclaimed, sitting up.

"Oh, yes," replied Old King Brady, bitterly, "that rascal has us penned all right. So much for not minding what we were about better. Well it can't be helped."

"What! You don't mean to say—" gasped Harry.

"Yes, I do mean to say, too. He has pulled up the ladder, replaced the cover and the stones. We are buried alive, my dear boy, and that is all there is to it. A nice mess! I am to blame for it all."

"So he was the man, after all," sighed Harry, getting on his feet.

"Indeed, I am not so sure then," replied Old King Brady. He acts to me more like a plain, every day lunatic. He didn't touch the skeleton. He snapped and snarled like a mad dog after he had so effectually thrown me down. Really, I thought my skull was fractured when I went against those stones. But I wasn't so hard hit as you. I thought at first you were dead. You have got a wicked lump on your forehead as it is."

"Oh, I am all right," said Harry carelessly. "Let's look at your head. An ugly scalp wound—nothing more. Well, this is a pretty piece of business, I must confess."

For a moment or so the Bradys stood looking at each other blankly. It was painfully evident that there was no getting out of the well by the way they came in. And the skeleton seemed to stare at them from its eyeless sockets. Harry half fancied that he could detect a grin on the fleshless face.

"You old sack of bones, and all this on your account!" he cried, shaking his fist at the skeleton.

"What's got you now?" snapped Old King Brady. "Have you taken leave of your wits, too? Let's be sensible and see what we can do to work out this snap. I am not giving up by any means. Sicker horses than this have got well."

He caught up the lantern and held it into the break.

"As I suppose, a secret passage," he muttered. "Come, we may work out all right. But one thing

at a time, and the first thing is to examine the skeleton."

"It has been correctly articulated for one thing," observed Harry. "Can it really be the skeleton of Mr. Hittinger's grandfather? If so, I think we may put this down as the Bradys' strangest case."

"I am ready to call it that anyhow," growled the old detective, who was "mad" clear through.

He pulled away more of the stones, wanting to see how the skeleton was supported. This proved to be by the means of two iron pegs passing through the feet and penetrating the ground.

"Singular arrangement," remarked Harry. "I thought at first that the thing was hanging from above."

"Don't see any paper or treasure box," observed Old King Brady. "I am afraid, Harry, that we are a day behind the fair."

"Meaning that someone has been here ahead of us by way of the secret passage?"

"Meaning precisely that."

"Then it is that man."

"More likely Dodd, for he had those so-called blank sheets. But for that foolish move of Homer Hittinger's all this trouble might have been saved."

"Whatever Dodd had the other fellow surely got."

"Put it probably. It don't surely follow, but I dare say you are right. Let us start exploring now. I am curious to see where that passage is going to lead us. We seem to have finished with the skeleton."

They stepped in through the break. The passage in which the skeleton stood was constructed on precisely the same plan as the one they had followed the night before. It proved to be exceedingly short. The Bradys had not gone twenty feet before they came up against a brick wall.

"Why look here!" exclaimed the old detective as he flashed his light upon it, "this wall is brand new."

"Then that settles it," cried Harry. "Lorrimer the mason is the murderer of Dodd the cashier."

"It would seem so."

Suddenly Harry exclaimed:

"Why, governor, here is the pickax. We ought easily to be able to batter down that green wall. I never once thought of it."

"Didn't you," said Old King Brady. "I did, but I am satisfied it will be a useless effort."

Harry got the pick and went to work on the wall. By dint of repeated attacks he did succeed in breaking down a section of it. A close line of steel rods had been built in behind the wall. To dislodge these was quite impossible.

"Nothing doing," said Harry, throwing down his pick.

"Show me," remarked Old King Brady, taking it up.

Harry supposed that he meant to try to dislodge the bars. But instead of that Old King Brady turned the other way and started toward the well.

"What are you going to do?" demanded Harry.

"I propose to find out what our bony friend, the late Captain Hittinger, is standing on, and

why he is so carefully pegged down," the old detective replied.

And having reached the place, Old King Brady began to dig with his pick. He had no more than loosened up the earth around the feet of the skeleton than the pick struck something which gave back a ringing sound.

"Iron chest! Buried treasure!" Harry exclaimed.

"Perhaps," was the reply, "but this time it sounded to me more like a stone."

"Bust ahead, governor, I am getting interested in this."

"Show me the shovel," said the old detective.

"I'll take a hand at it," replied Harry as he secured the shovel.

He cleared away the earth, revealing a flagstone such as the yard above was paved with. The pegs in the skeleton were leaded into this stone. Between the feet was an iron ring, and below the ring were letters deeply cut, but so filled with earth that it was impossible to make them out. Harry brushed away the earth with his handkerchief, and then the detectives were able to read:

"I am John Hittinger, the murderer. I stand on the tomb of my victims. Memento Mori."

CHAPTER XI.—Alice Makes a Bold Break.

When Alice got back to the hotel she found a note from Harry telling what Old King Brady had discovered at Haddon Beach, and stating that they had gone to Copton street to search for the old well. Alice's first idea was to join her partners there, but just then came the card of a lady, a particular friend, who had come to call. It proved to be not only a call, but a request.

The lady insisted upon taking Alice to her home to tea. Feeling that there was nothing especial for her to do, Alice yielded. It was after ten when she returned to the hotel. To her surprise, and not a little to her concern, she found that the Bradys had not yet returned.

Alice sat waiting until 11 o'clock, and then when they did not come she determined to go to Copton street in search of them. Needless to say she again adopted her male disguise. It was a raw, disagreeable night. Arrived at Copton street, she located No. 50. The house was dark save for a light in the front room on the lower floor, which shone dimly through the cracks of the closed shutters.

"Could it be the Bradys?" Alice asked herself.

There seemed to be but one way of finding out, and that was to ring the bell and see who came to the door. Satisfied that she was in no danger of being recognized she boldly pulled the bell. The instant the bell resounded through the house the light vanished. Then after a minute the closed shutters of a window on the second floor were slightly opened and a man's voice demanded who was there.

It was neither Old King Brady's voice nor Harry's. Alice hardly knowing how to act, but feeling that there was every necessity for caution, inquired for Mr. Moneypenny, and was gruffly told that he was not in. Then the shutters were pulled to and the window slammed shut. It

seemed that she could trace some resemblance in the voice to that of the murderer of Dodd.

Going around the corner, she entered the house of the hundred traps and made her way to room 22, to which she still carried the key. Alice had now determined to adopt a bold course. This was nothing less than to penetrate to the Copton street house by way of the underground passage. Alice started along the passage, guided by her flashlight. At the foot of the secret stairs she found the two iron-doors open as the Bradys had left them.

Alice, making sure that her revolver was ready for instant use, started along the passage leading to the Copton street house. She had not advanced far when her attention was attracted by startling sounds. Heavy blows came from behind the wall on the left. Quite uncertain what to do, Alice decided to be on the safe side, so she kept on along the passage, coming to the secret door which Old King Brady had described and which led her into the supposed skeleton factory in the cellar.

Alice stopped only for one good look around, and then crept up the stairs and passed out through the closet into the main hall of the Copton street house. Here it was a case of lights out and close listening. The instant her own light was extinguished Alice located a light in the front room.

Creeping in behind a tier of barrels, Alice now found herself able to get a peep into the front room. The man she saw was Lorrimer the mason. He was seated at the desk in which Old King Brady found the picture postal, studying a legal paper of considerable bulk. He was reading half aloud in a mumbling voice, and from the way in which he mispronounced certain words he betrayed himself as an ignorant man.

"Confound the luck, I can't make head nor tail of it," he muttered. "It needs a lawyer. Don't believe there is anything into it for me anyway unless I sell out to Hittinger. I s'pose that can be done, now I've put the Bradys out of the way."

She listened to the mumblings, catching a sentence here and there.

"Give and bequeath all that plot and parcel of land beginning at a point," et cetera.

"Why, it's a will," thought Alice as she listened. "It is somebody's will. Probably the old captain's. The Bradys must have found the skeleton before he came to grief."

But there were other papers on the desk besides the one Lorrimer was studying.

"If I could only get my hands on them," thought Alice, but this seemed a wild idea.

Certain it is that the chance she sought came to Alice now. At first she thought that all was up with her, for Lorrimer suddenly arose and came into the bar-room. But the man did not even glance her way. He went directly behind the bar and bent down. Alice could hear him pouring something. Evidently he was getting a drink. Quick as thought she glided from her concealment into the front room, swept all papers from the desk, thrust them into her pocket and, blowing out the light, opened the door leading into the passage, and slid through.

All breathless, Alice made for the closet without using the flashlight. She used it when she

got on the stairs, though, and ran down into the skeleton factory. A moment later she was in the underground passage. Scarce had she gained the foot of the stairs leading down into the passage when Lorrimer was heard behind her.

"Stop, you snoozer!" he shouted. "Stop or I fire!"

Alice shut off her flashlight and fled for her life. But this was not going to save her. Lorrimer had a flashlight of his own. He fired now. The shot whizzed above Alice's head.

CHAPTER XII.—Conclusion.

Talk about strange cases! A skeleton standing on the tomb of his victims. What did it all mean?

"We want to know what lies beneath that stone, Harry," said Old King Brady, emphatically.

They were able to lift it off the pegs without disturbing a bone, so ingeniously had the thing been contrived. Laying it out at full length, Old King Brady got a grip on the ring and pulled. There was no such thing as moving the stone that way, however, until he got busy with the crowbar.

Then it began to give, and a few vigorous pries getting it well started, Harry grabbed the ring and pulled it up. Beneath was a shallow vault, and grawsome enough were its contents. Twenty skulls were in evidence; bones were scattered everywhere. But amid those grim relics was a small iron box.

"That for ours!" exclaimed Harry, and he lowered himself down into that pit of death.

"Pass it up," said Old King Brady.

Old King Brady received the box and Harry climbed out unaided. Old King Brady was not long in determining the contents of the boxes. Diamonds they were, rubies, sapphires and emeralds, too, it would appear; fine stones, and all unset. The old detective only examined a few.

"There is a fortune here all right," he declared. "Homer Hittinger's bank is saved if we can only get away with the goods, but stay! Here is a paper of some sort. Now what have we here?"

And unfolding the paper, he read as follows:

"The contents of this box I estimate to be worth about a hundred thousand dollars. My son or my grandson, if either of you live to open it, if the faithful hand I trust it to carries out my will and does not betray his trust, then all is yours if you care to receive ill-gotten gains. Know that for years I have lived a double life. At heart I have been a friend. I learned to love murder while master of a slaver on the African coast. Hundreds of negroes have I killed with my own hands. Murder became a passion with me. It was for that reason that when I settled down in Boston and tried to be respectable I was forced to give it up and led a double life for years. It was I who was the real proprietor of the Mariners Return. Many a man have I murdered in that house and in the one in the rear—murdered and robbed. Their bodies I boiled, their bones I buried in this vault. From one, a man who posed as a sailor, but who really was an adventurer, perhaps a thief, I obtained these gems. Where he got them I have no idea. I murdered him for the love of it, same as the rest. I was amazed

when I came to search his body and found the contents of this box concealed in his various pockets. I have never disturbed them, for I was rich enough. They are yours to do as you will with. As for the man I murdered, and from whom I stole them, I do not even know his name. Old age is now upon me. Afflicted with an incurable disease, I know that my end is near. For that reason I have decided to poison myself. My faithful friend will boil my bones as we have boiled those of others. My skeleton will be mounted and placed over this tomb. The paper in my hand will explain itself; that is, if Mr. Moneypenny carries out my instructions. The money I openly leave behind me was all honestly made and can bring no curse to anyone. All this if the sealed packet which I leave with my friend Philipson is ever opened. My preference is that it should never be. I have left instructions that it shall be destroyed at the end of a hundred years.

“June 15, 1843.

John Hittinger.”

“Amazing!” exclaimed Old King Brady as he finished reading this remarkable document. “Well, may this be called the Bradys’ strangest case!”

“A strange, strange case!”

“Indeed yes. But put back the stone, Harry. All this makes me sick, accustomed as I am to such rights.”

Harry replaced the stone. Old King Brady sounded the walls but there was nothing to indicate than any opening lay beyond.

“It may spell a two days’ job,” remarked Harry.

“Hardly that,” replied the old detective. “I should imagine that we ought to be able to do it in a day. Fortunately we have no other way of putting in time just at present, so let us get right to work.”

They had spent nearly two hours as it was, and two more were added to them before they could get a chance even to begin. For this was no “green” wall which they tackled now. Its age was nearly a century, and the bricks and mortar were as hard as granite blocks. But a pickax was just the tool for the purpose. The Bradys took turns at handling it.

At last when they were all worn out a breach was finally made. When the opening became large enough to enable them to work to advantage, Harry went at it with the pick, while Old King Brady worked the shovel, throwing the earth back into the passage. This was less laborious than the work on the wall had been, but it was slow. At last, however, it began to look as if success was going to crown their efforts, for they came to another wall.

“More pounding,” groaned Old King Brady. “Still it is not nearly as bad as it might have been.”

“Indeed no,” replied Harry, cheerfully, “we have only had about six feet of earth to work through. I looked for at least ten.”

“But on the job, boy! We may have the luck to get home by midnight after all.”

And this was the pounding heard by Alice, who came along shortly after this. But the Bradys heard nothing, of course, and little dreamed that Alice was on the other side. The first sound not made by themselves which reached their ears was

the shot fired by Lorimer. At this time they had just succeeded in penetrating the wall.

“What in thunder is that?” cried Harry.

He thought the bullet had entered the breach which he had made, and he jumped aside. Now this wall acted differently from the other. Weakened by the repeated blows which had been showered upon it, the wall suddenly collapsed, falling outward. It nearly swamped poor Alice, who was thus brought to a halt by the pile of bricks. At the same instant a second shot went whizzing past her ear.

“Alice!” cried Harry, reaching out with his lantern. “Was it you who fired?”

“No, but I am firing now!” cried Alice, wheeling about.

She had already drawn her revolver, and she let fly just as Lorimer was about to fire again. With a fierce imprecation the man fell backward and lay at full length upon the floor of the passage. The hole even now was not quite big enough to let them through, but Harry soon widened the breach. Alice was all in a tremble.

“I have captured a lot of papers,” she explained. “I was looking for you in that Copton street house. I heard the pounding when I went through. I thought likely though you were in there.”

“Yes, walled up in the well by that same precious rascal,” cried Harry. “But let me see how it fares with him before we do anything else.”

Lorimer was severely wounded, but not dead, nor did he die it may be mentioned until the gallows claimed him for the murder of Dodd. Old King Brady showed him such attention as he could. He and Harry then carried him through to Copton street and laid him on an old lounge. Alice now produced her papers.

“The blank sheets!” cried Old King Brady, who recognized the quality of the paper. “Good!”

“And this seems to be old Moneypenny’s will,” added Alice, looking over the larger document.

“Taken from the hand of the skeleton in the well,” said Old King Brady. “Let us see.”

He hastily examined the document.

“Yes, that’s what it is,” he declared. “Leaves all his property to Hittinger. Good, good!”

Harry had taken the “blank sheets” from Alice.

But they were blank no longer. Somebody had brought out the invisible writing and traced it over with black ink. It was a similar statement to that found in the gem box, though differently worded and evidently written at an earlier date. It married also the information as to how to get into the other passage from the Copton street house by a secret panel which Old King Brady afterward located. And such was the ending of the Bradys’ strangest case.

Lorimer recovered in a hospital to die on the gallows the confessed murderer of Dodd, who proved to be his cousin. Old Mat Moneypenny’s will stood. Hittinger sold out the Copton street property to Mr. Bradshaw and associates for over a million. As for the gems, they only brought some forty thousand. The diamonds did that; the colored stones proved to be fakes.

Next week’s issue will contain “THE BRADYS AND THE SCHOOL-BOY; or, HOT WORK ON THE BRANDON CASE.”

CURRENT NEWS

TOO MUCH MUSCLE

With a snap heard by players and fans, John Corcoran's right arm broke as he was pitching to a batter at Portland, Me. An X-ray showed fracture, probably because the muscles were stronger than the bone.

HORSESHOE GROWS IN TREE

Frank Romeo chopped down an old tree at Haddonfield, N. J., and was making ready to lay in his supply of winter kindling when his axe gave a metallic ring. When the log was split he found an imbedded horseshoe. From the position of the horseshoe in the tree and from the rings indicating the tree's age, Romeo figured that the shoe must have been in the tree since 1777.

SHARKS IN MANILA BAY

Fishermen have reported an unusual number of sharks in Manila Bay in recent weeks, and some scientists believe that the many earthquakes experienced in the Philippines and adjacent islands have driven the sharks into less disturbed waters.

It is said that in the days when Dewey's ships

were lying in the bay near Cavite "swimming call" for the crew sounded each day, but now crews of the American fleet are forbidden to swim in the deep water unless they remain within the wire screening at Canacao Bay, where the Cavite naval station is located.

A NEW INVENTION

When the average man warms his hands before the fire of his hearth he has little thought of how far away the heat may be felt. However, if there were any relation between the practical and scientific recording of heat a device discovered at the Johns Hopkins Physical Laboratory might eliminate many worries about coal bills.

The device, known as a vacuum thermopile, where heat may be recorded at great distances from its source, has been invented by Dr. A. H. Pfund, associate professor in physics at Johns Hopkins University, according to a report just released. The instrument has proved so effective that in tests at Allegheny Observatory, where a reflector was used in conjunction with the thermopile, heat radiation was detected from a candle eighteen miles away.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

The Death Sentence.

"Zanita we know is loyal," said Colonel Gonzales; "it is not necessary to call him. Now, as evidence seems clear, we need spend little more time. But it is customary to permit the prisoners to say a word, if they wish, in their own defense."

The members of the court looked at Dick and Jupe. For a moment the boys hesitated. Then Dick, with flaming face and a dignified air, stepped forward, saying:

"Yes, I will say a word in our defense. I will mention the fact that we were dispatched on a dangerous and important mission. We risked our lives to perform it, which we did successfully. For this we get no credit, but are accused falsely and on the word of an irresponsible half-breed savage and will be sentenced to death. And all for having served the Mexican cause and having done our duty."

Dick then continued slowly and in an impressive manner to describe the exact facts in the case. He told of their becoming lost in the wilds, and of their finally reaching the Clifford ranch, only to find it destroyed.

Dick turned to the man Miguel, and asked:

"What do you mean by telling such a story about us? You know that it is not true. Do you want to see us die for a crime that we are not guilty of? Are you a man?"

Miguel grinned, showing his teeth.

"You spy!" he hissed; "you gringo!"

Colonel Gonzales made a sign to a couple of the guard, and they stepped forward.

"The case is closed," said Gonzales, in stern tones; "take the prisoners out. Call the firing squad."

"Do you mean to order us shot, Señor Colonel?" asked Dick.

"The sentence of the court is unanimous in the case of a traitor," responded Colonel Gonzales, coldly.

"But you must remember we do not belong to your staff. We are General Velasco's aides. You should give us a chance to appeal to him."

"You are at present subordinate to my command," said Gonzales, with an icy tone; "take them out, men."

The captain of the guard saluted, and then Dick and Jupe were led from the tent. But not before Dick said, warmly:

"Colonel Gonzales, this is murder. Our government will some day take up this custom of

yours of shooting and murdering people indiscriminately."

When they emerged from the tent an orderly ran out, saying to the captain of the guard:

"Señor Captain, it is the order of the colonel that the prisoners are to be shot at sunrise."

The captain saluted, and answered:

"Sí, señor! The colonel's orders will be obeyed."

Then Dick and Jupe were marched back to their prison. There they had time to ponder over it all and comprehend fully their position.

"By jingo!" exclaimed Jupe, "we are in a scrape, Dick. But we will never let those greasers see us show the white feather. We will defy them to the last."

"This is tough, Jupe! Only think what sort of treatment this is for serving them and helping their cause."

However, the boys had one hope. This was that General Velasco might hear about it. They made an effort to get word with one of the guards and send word to Velasco.

It was of no use.

The guard only turned a cold shoulder to them. It seemed now as if nothing on earth would save them.

The situation of the two young Americans was certainly desperate. Death seemed certain.

Dick was not so fearful of death as he was indignant at the false charge against them. The injustice of it all stung him and stirred up bitter feelings.

"I don't see what our government is thinking of," said Dick, furiously; "they are asleep. To think of their permitting such goings-on right here on their own border. They sit still and make no protest. If an outrage is committed down here and an American is robbed or shot and killed, the State Department takes it up and pretends to make an investigation. The State Department, in my mind, is a huge joke. They investigate and hush the newspapers up, and that is all there is of it. Either we have become a race of cowards, or money interests are back of every particle of national honor. There is no such thing as national honor these days. Financial interests first, national honor last. That is the rule in these days."

"Oh, say, cool off, Dick," advised Jupe, laughing; "what a pity you couldn't go into Congress with that appeal!"

Dick had to laugh himself, but he was indignant. Not that he feared death, but it was the ignominy of being shot on the false charge of being a traitor.

Time passed, and the boys watched the sun sink in the west, and knew that just as it would reach the line of the horizon the guard would come and they would go forth to their death.

Early in the day they had seen Zapata once at a distance. He glanced at the door of their tent, and they saw that his face was apparently illumined with an expression of hate.

It puzzled Dick greatly.

"What do you think of that, Jupe? I thought that Indian scout liked us. He seemed to, and now he turns against us also."

(To be continued.)

FROM EVERYWHERE

MANUFACTURING A LAKE

A heavy blast, fired in the Pextang stone quarries, one of the largest workings in Central Pennsylvania, turned the quarry into a permanent lake overnight. The charge blew a hole in the bottom of the rock and struck a spring, which in twenty-four hours made a lake approximately 400 feet long, 100 feet in width and from five to seventy feet in depth. Assistant State Geologist R. W. Stone expressed the opinion that the lagoon is permanent.

SUBWAY BEGGAR HAS EASY PICKING

Union beggars are getting \$5 a hour this season, it would appear from developments in Flatbush Court, Brooklyn, N. Y. Alexander Thompson of Yonkers was arraigned before Magistrate Steers, charged with vagrancy after he had been arrested in a subway station by an officer of the Mendicancy Squad.

Thompson told the Judge he commuted daily from Yonkers to favorite spots in Brooklyn where the pickings were good. The Judge expressed the opinion that Brooklynites were pretty gullible to be taken in by professional beggars. Thompson was not severe in his demands on the Brooklyn public. He told the Judge he merely stayed long enough to collect about \$5, which takes about an hour, he said.

The Judge gave Thompson sixty days. Timothy O'Brien, up on the same charge and with twenty previous convictions, got six months.

Both Thompson and O'Brien have wooden legs, but park them when they start work and use crutches.

LARGEST MOTOR YACHT TO TOUR AROUND WORLD

Eighty passengers will leave Southampton in October on the Westward, the largest motor yacht afloat, on a ten months' tour around the world for scientific research purposes. The ship is owned by Commander C. H. Lightoller, who, as second officer aboard the Titanic, remained aboard the stricken liner until she sank.

The Hydrographic Office of the United States Navy Department has provided the Westward with a set of charts covering the proposed tour and has asked Mr. Lightoller to report on their accuracy. The Westward will call at the West Indies, thence sailing through the Panama Canal to the South Sea Islands.

After touching at Malpelo the yacht will make for Galapagos and the Marquesas Islands. The Galapagos group, composed entirely of extinct volcanic cones, is probably the weirdest ring of islands in the world. The Paumotu Islands, famous for the pearl lagoons, will be the next stopping-place, then the Society Islands, Samoa, Fiji, Tonga, Loyalty, New Caledonia and Brisbane.

The vessel then will thread her way up Great Barrier Reef to Thursday Island, Gulf of Carpentaria, and through the islands of the Malayan Archipelago, visiting Christmas Islands, Cocos, Keeling, Diego, Gracia, Egmont and Male. A complete film of the trip will be taken.

CATCHING AN OCTOPUS

On the coasts of Cornwall, England, the largest octopi are readily caught on the fisherman's hook, and an objectionable companionship is sometimes the result: This was the case recently near Mavagissey. On a dark autumn night, in a small boat, Samuel Kelly was fishing on the high rocks off the Griffin Headland, when one of these devil-fish took his bait, and with the usual effort was hauled on board. But his difficulty was to get the hook to continue his work, for he had been successful in catching several pollock and conger, and the moment he touched the brute some of its clammy tentacles would embrace his arm, holding him to the spot, for its other arms were fastened around the thwart. Soon the beast became so violent that it really made him fear it.

He made a supreme effort to get his hook, but the creature fastened its largest suckers on the back of his right hand, and in the battle he had to drop his line and with the nails of his left hand to dig the suckers out of his flesh, for they seemed to bury themselves there.

After this experience there was no more doubt or indecision in the fight, for, seizing a sharp knife, he quickly cut the hook from its hold, upon which the cuttle crept away to another part of the boat.

But this did not finish Mr. Kelly's night work, for on again throwing out his line he had a still heavier haul, and when it came to the waterline he used all his strength, for the line was new and stronger than he could break.

In his dilemma he had to hold on tight and, looking over the side by the aid of a flickering light, he found himself glaring into the eyes of another devilfish, and a much larger one than the first.

He further found that the creature had taken the boat for its enemy and was attacking it with all its force, its tentacles embracing the stern on the one hand and running forward to near the middle section on the other.

On thinking over his recent troubles with its neighbor, and the waste of time likely to ensue in a still longer encounter with a stronger brute, he decided not to risk another fight, but to use the advantage of its violent onslaught on the boat.

Taking his knife and watching his opportunity he finally cut the hook out of the intruder, which, on being liberated, soon dropped out of sight.

The next day I verified most of Mr. Kelly's statements.

The arms of the dead octopus in the boat stretched over seven feet, and on the back of Mr. Kelly's hand was a very black, round bruise about half an inch in diameter, corresponding with the inner circle of one of the largest suckers of the dead octopus.

Since then he has caught several of these cuttles, and one whose arms stretched over six feet and a half.

In our waters none of these head-footed mollusks have been known to take human life, but it is scarcely questionable, if favorable opportunities presented themselves, that they would do so.

INTERESTING RADIO NEWS AND HINTS

ANOTHER TUBE

The Pratt tube was invented by Dr. H. P. Pratt of Chicago. It consists of two plates in disk form in parallel, with a double spiral grid inserted between the plates and filament. The plate voltage varies from 8 to 40 volts. It operates on four dry cells or a 6-volt storage battery and consumes .25 ampere.

One stage of radio frequency amplification ahead of the crystal detector works more efficiently than two or three stages. If further stages are employed there will be a reduction in signal strength. A stage of radio frequency amplification adds to the selectivity of a crystal detector.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

Theoretically, a one-tube reflex is equal to three tubes, as it is designed to furnish one stage of radio frequency and one stage of audio frequency amplification; however, in practical use the average one-tube reflex is equal to or slightly better than a two-tube set.

TWO GOOD HINTS

A condenser in series with the antenna or ground reduces the wave length. The smaller the capacity of such a condenser the greater will be the reduction in wave length. A loading coil is used to reach higher wave length than the set can otherwise reach in connection with a particular antenna. It produces the same results as lengthening the antenna.

CARE OF LIGHTS

A vacuum tube should not be lighted at maximum brilliancy. The more current supplied to the filament the more electrons flow, but after a certain filament brilliancy is reached there will be no further flow of electrons. This is called the "critical point" or "saturation point." If the filament is burned past the critical point, the life of the tube is shortened without an increase in efficiency.

THE INVISIBLE LOUD-SPEAKER

Along with the tendency to place all radio equipment in a fine cabinet so as to find a place for it in the living-room, there is a tendency to place the loud-speaker in a cabinet. Several of the present offerings are in the form of attractive cabinets, provided with a scroll and screen front. Just as in the case of the modern phonograph, it seems almost certain that the awkward loud-speaker horn must eventually disappear into a cabinet.

RADIO FREQUENCY IN A HANDY PACKAGE

There has lately appeared on the market a vario-transformer which simplifies the problem of radio-frequency amplification. Instead of having a transformer with fixed windings, this vario-transformer has an adjustment which tunes it accurately for all wave-lengths between 200 and

600 meters. Perfect shielding and pig-tail connections assure clear tones. Furthermore, the amplification is uniformly maintained throughout the broadcasting range. This vario-transformer is put out as a separate instrument, and also in conjunction with a socket and rheostat, all mounted on a neat socket.

THE TRANSINDUCTOR

This new transforming apparatus was designed and invented by Clinton H. Hulbert. One of the latest types of transinductors is applied as a push-and-pull radio-frequency transformer. This is the first instance of push-and-pull radio-frequency amplification. Push-and-pull amplification applied to radio-frequency with the use of transinductors is said to overcome distortion, increase amplification, and give super-selective tuning; in fact, it has similar advantages to those of the well-known audio push-and-pull amplification in radio-frequency. The push-and-null transinductor by means of one dial is capable of controlling the magnetic inductance, capacity and iron. It acts as a complete wave-length tuner, at maximum efficiency, from 200 to 600 meters. It requires no variable condenser or any other control to bring out super-selectivity and sensitivity in receiving, according to the inventor's claims.

RADIO REACHES BRAZIL

Dr. A. H. Taylor of the Naval Research Laboratory of Washington, who has been experimenting with transmission, recently spanned the continent with a 54-meter wave. A few days after this achievement the head of the Naval radio research work was surprised to get a letter from Rio de Janeiro stating that his 54-meter transmitter at Bellevue had been heard also in that distant city.

His last report is especially interesting, as the distance is 4,780 miles over land and sea and difficulty has frequently been found in getting radio messages over the part of South America which projects eastward into the Atlantic. The report from the fan in Rio, whose name is Lacombe stated that at 11 p. m. on July 1, 3 and 5 he heard the special short wave set from Bellevue, D. C., distinctly.

On the West Coast it was an amateur by the name of Stanley T. Runyon, operator of Station 6 A G E, who reported the reception of Dr. Taylor's transmissions on July 14.

These confirmations that short-wave transmissions are reliable for long distances comes as an inducement to amateurs to try out the lower wave lengths, especially since the Department of Commerce has just opened several bands for their use below 200 meters. One of the bands includes the wave length used by the Naval expert.

Dr. Taylor transmits on 54 meters on Monday, Wednesday and Friday nights at 8, 9, 10 and 11 o'clock and at half-past these hours on 100 meters, so that all amateurs have an opportunity to test their receivers for the lower wave lengths.

GOOD READING

LIGHTNING AND MULE

An electric cable being stretched by mule power at Burgin, Ky., was struck by a bolt of lightning. The mule's resultant kick hurled the shoes on his hind feet off and forty feet away. Examination showed that the nails had been straightened and drawn as clean as if done by a blacksmith. The mule was burned a bit, but will recover.

WATER-FILLED CAVE BAFFLES EXPLORERS

Exploration of a large unnamed cave near Navajo Lake, Southern Utah, has been begun by a party of Cedar City residents. Recently five men, wading in water sometimes three feet deep, penetrated the cave for 300 feet, but they were forced out by lack of oxygen.

The entrance, about five feet in diameter, was discovered several years ago. Just how far back the cave runs could not be determined by those in the exploration party, but in some places inside it was 50 feet from the floor to the roof. When more suitable equipment is received a thorough survey is planned.

STAR STRIKES; CROWD THROWS OUT HUSBAND

Devoted admirers of Frau Emmy Shaw, the successful Mme. Pompadour now playing in Dresden, waited in vain the other night for the curtain to rise on the second act. The lady had suddenly struck. The manager appeared before the curtain, made abject apologies and promised the audience the return of the price of their seats.

The husband of the singer, Dr. Hamko, shouted from one of the boxes that no salary had been paid his wife for weeks past. The indignant audience, however, sided with the manager, yelling that \$175 a night was too high a salary for any actress in times of general stress, and to relieve their feelings they threw the angry husband out of the theatre.

BOY, SPURNING 50-CENT BRIBE, SAVES BANK \$3,200

Fritz Broberg, a messenger boy employed by the Western Union Telegraph Company at its office at 195 Broadway, was commended for remembering the rules of the company, even when confronted with a 50-cent bribe. He received a reward from the Importers and Traders Bank also for saving it \$3,200.

A stranger stopped Broberg on Broadway and offered him 50 cents to take a check for \$3,200, ostensibly drawn by the Warren Savings Bank and Trust Company of Warren, Pa., on the Importers and Traders Bank, to the latter institution for certification.

Broberg replied that it was against the rules to undertake any errand without reporting first to the office. The man forced the check on him, however. Broberg took it to the Western Union office, whence a telephone message was sent to the Importers and Traders Bank, where it was said the check was worthless.

HOBES FLOCK TO BERLIN

Beggars and vagabonds have increased in number all over Europe, and particularly in Germany, since the end of the World War, notes a writer in the "Berliner Zeitung." According to an authentic estimate there were 50,000 or 60,000 beggars in all states of Europe in 1910, not including European Turkey. The greatest percentages were found in Italy and Spain. In Germany, it was estimated, there were from 8,500 to 9,000 hoboes. Unemployment, of course, hardly was known fifteen years ago.

Today the enormous increase in the numbers of professional beggars and tramps is first of all a result of the unemployment crisis. Once driven by necessity into begging, thousands of men found they were able to make a living without working. In big cities this sort begs, aside from the regular unemployment aid, as a good "side income."

The statistics of inns for vagabonds and beggars prove that more than 10 per cent of all unemployed men in Berlin have become beggars. There are more than 12,000 beggars in Berlin nowadays. This means that each 400 persons in Berlin have to maintain one beggar.

Germany altogether has thirty working houses and more than sixty work-homes for tramps. In addition to these there are a great number of charitable inns for tramps and beggars.

Germany now has from 55,000 to 60,000 tramps. Although this figure seems to be very high, it still may be too low, because the inns in very small towns could not be included in the statistical survey recently made by the Labor Office.

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FROM ALL POINTS**RATS BIG AS CATS**

Residents along the north lake shore of Kenosha maintain that Kenosha needs a Pied Piper. Rats as big as cats and so bold that they dare to chase the children off the beach are alleged to be housed in a part of the old city dump on Lake Avenue. R. E. Dansfield asked the police for permission to go gunning for the rats, maintaining his children had been frightened away from the beach by the rodents.

ALASKAN PLANE SERVICE

Subscribers for the Fairbanks News-Miner-Citizen in Alaska, who live in lonely cabins and isolated camps within a 100-mile radius of the town, have their papers delivered by airplane a few hours after publication. This method is saving weeks for the readers. The old method was to send accumulated issues by dog teams once a month.

TWO TRAPPED IN FURNACE

In an effort to elude two night patrolmen, Charles E. Lawson and Edward G. Diettlin, each seventeen, jumped into the firebox of a furnace, in the cellar of Colt's clothing store, Winsted, Conn. The two officers and two other men worked ten minutes before they released the boys, who were wedged in the firebox.

The fugitives had entered the cellar bent on looting the store, but were thwarted by locked metal doors leading from cellar to store. Both were remanded for trial in Criminal Superior Court.

FORMER KAISER SUPPORTS WHOLE FAMILY

Former Emperor William has been enjoying a monthly drawing account of 50,000 gold marks since January 1, 1924, with which he was expected to support himself, his wife and his five sons and their families and also his brother, Prince Henry, and his cousin, Prince Friedrich Leopold.

As now constituted the Hohenzollern family comprises about forty heads, all of whom will

share in the final settlement between the former ruling house and Prussia.

The process of inventorying the varied holdings of the Hohenzollerns has progressed sufficiently to enable the Prussian Minister of Finance to issue a statement of the temporary settlements.

Up to May, 1920, Prussia had turned over to the former Emperor 32,000,000 marks to enable him to set up his domicile in Holland. Prussia purchased from him a plot in the heart of Berlin on which the present "White House" is. During 1923 William got a further instalment of about \$10,000 from the proceeds of the royal exchequer.

Most of the former royal palaces and hunting lodges will remain the permanent property of Prussia. William will retain several minor castles in Potsdam and its vicinity.

LAUGHS

"Why are you crying, my little man?" "All my brothers and sisters are having a holiday and I ain't." "And why not?" "Because I don't go to school yet."

"What do you think of this idea of the recall?" "It wouldn't work," replied the baseball fan. "If you understood to put an umpire out every time the crowd hissed him the game couldn't go on."

"Have you sufficient confidence in me," he inquired, "to let me have five dollars?" "Yes, certainly, I have the confidence," was the rejoinder, "but I haven't the five dollars."

Landlord (pleasingly, at doorway)—Well, how do you like your new quarters? Tenant (gazing sadly around)—I should hardly call them quarters. Why not eighths?

An Ardsley man named Flanagan changed his name to Fowler because the kids used to shout after him, "Oh, Mr. Flanagan, won't you rush the can again?" "Now the kids shout, "Oh, Mr. Fowler, won't you rush the growler?"

"I thought you said George had married a good manager?" "He did." "I called on her yesterday and the house was in a terrible disorder. It looked as if everything had been left to take care of itself." "But you should see her manager George."

"Upon what grounds do you seek a divorce?" asked the lawyer whom she had just retained. "Non-support, cruelty, or—" "Both," she cried, tearfully; "he would not support my passionate longing for a diamond necklace, and if that isn't cruelty, I'd like to know."

The Patient—Doc, I can't pay you no money, while I ain't got none, a'ready. Will you take it out in trade? The Dentist—Well, I might consider that. What's your business? The Patient—I lead a leedle Choiaman band. We'll come around and serenade you effry nightd for a mont', yet.

BRIEF BUT POINTED**BOOZE PLANT IN COP'S HOME**

Lee W. O'Neill, Acting Desk Sergeant at the Woodlawn Police Station, Chicago, was arrested this evening as a distiller and bootlegger. Prohibition agents had raided his home, No. 4,130 Grand Boulevard.

Sergeant O'Neill has been on the police force sixteen years. It was alleged his plant for turning out fake bottles of well known brands of bourbon, Scotch and Canadian whiskey was the most complete the Prohibition office had ever encountered. The haul included a 150-gallon copper still.

**MAY TAKE 144 YEARS TO FINISH
DICTIONARY**

The French Academy has completed, but not yet printed, the first volume of its dictionary of the French language, which comprises the Section A-H.

The work was begun in 1878 and has, therefore, taken forty-six years. At the same rate of progress the full dictionary will be finished ninety-eight years from now. The revision of the revision, necessitated by the changes which have taken place in the language in the forty-six years during which the first volume has been in preparation is now being carried out, and it is expected that the volume will be published about next Easter.

The idea of making an authoritative dictionary was launched in 1634 and the first edition was published in 1694, forty-five years after the actual work was begun. Other editions appeared in 1718, 1740, 1762, 1811, 1835 and 1877. The edition of 1877 has been taken as the basis for the new dictionary.

LOST ROYAL TREASURE DISCOVERED

Early last year the archives of King Nicholas of Montenegro and some valuables, mostly foreign orders, were accidentally discovered at Cetinje, but it was thought that the majority of the beautiful gold and silver plate with which the little palace had been—for a kingdom tiny and far from rich—abundantly supplied, must have been taken by the enemy.

An official of the Ministry of Finance, however, who has recently been in Zagreb on temporary duty, happened while there to ask for a room in a Government building which he could use as an office. He was told that the only room available was being used as a storeroom and, hearing that the packing cases with which it was filled were the property of the late King Nicholas, he was interested and began to examine them. It was soon discovered that they were full of the missing treasure, consisting of large quantities of gold and silver vessels of every description. The plate is valued at many millions of dinars and becomes, of course, Government property.

**MT. SHASTA GLACIER, DISLODGED BY
HEAT, CRASHING DOWNWARD**

The Mount Shasta glacier, dislodged by the long-continued drought and warm weather, has slipped from its ancient resting-place on the north

side of the mountain and is moving down the slope at a rate of five miles an hour, snapping off big trees in its path and thrusting immense boulders before it.

The movement began a short time after dawn recently and at noon the huge mass of ice was well within the timber line. Huge clouds of vapor are arising as the moraines of the glacier are being broken up by its movement and these clouds are forming one big cloud over the head of the moving mass.

The journey of the glacier can be seen twenty miles away. It is accompanied by a distinct roar, which also can be heard from a considerable distance.

The glacier movement evidently is not related to the phenomenon of a heavy mud flow on the opposite side of the mountain recently. This flow is believed to have started from other ice deposits melting under many days of hot sunshine.

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

WED 'EM IN OVERALLS

A carpenter's coat and overalls took the place of the customary ministerial frock when the Rev. Myron L. Cutler, pastor of the Universalist church, East Jaffery, N. H., read the marriage ceremony for Miss Ruth F. Johnson and David R. Young, both of Worcester, Mass.

The young couple found Mr. Cutler shingling the roof of his church. Despite his pleadings that he be given time to change into the proper attire, the couple refused to wait. Mr. Cutler donned a carpenter's coat, covering his shirt sleeves, and, still in his overalls, accompanied the couple to the church, where he read the ceremony.

LARGEST CALIFORNIA FAMILY

The largest family in California has been found in Los Angeles.

An investigation of the birth records of the State Bureau of Statistics, made by the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, disclosed the family of Mr. and Mrs. George Andrew Toombs of No. 1418½ East Ninth street, comprising twenty-two children ranging from thirty-one years to three and one-half months, as the prize number of offsprings of any single family in California. The progenitor of the family is nearing his sixtieth year.

A search to find the largest family in the State was begun as a result of a contest started by the Sacramento, Cal., Chamber of Commerce, and which is offering a prize for the largest California family appearing at the State Fair.

Although Toombs is a native of Missouri, the mother and each of the children were born in California. There have never been any deaths in the family and of the twenty-two children there are three sets of twins.

RANGERS SEEK TWO MEN LOST IN GLACIER PARK

Joseph Whitehead, 29 years old, an engineer employed by the Universal Battery Company of Chicago, and his brother William, seven years younger, a student of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston, are lost somewhere in the wilds of the Glacier National Park in Montana and parties are out searching for them.

The brothers were last seen on August 23. They told acquaintances that they were going to Granite Park, in the central part of the park. They took the trail to Lake McDonald and reached the lake, but have not since been heard from.

The entire park ranger force of the park is engaged in a systematic search and is being assisted by volunteers from the park utility companies and by visitors to the park. All available agencies, both Government and private, are at work in an endeavor to locate the men, and no step will be left untaken to find them.

After leaving Lake McDonald, their itinerary included a long trip, crossing the divide on foot to the east side of the park. Search parties are exploring the ravines and cliffs and the shores of Lake McDonald for some sign that will give

a trace as their whereabouts if they are still in the park, or some definite sign if they have left it. So far all efforts have proved unavailing.

EGYPT'S CURSE ON HIM, SCIENTIST ENDS LIFE

Has the curse of ancient Egypt been called down again on alien disturbers of her buried treasures?

This is once more the talk of London since the suicide of H. G. Evelyn-White, Egyptologist of Leeds University. A farewell letter at his inquest said: "I knew there was a curse on me, though I had leave to take those manuscripts to Cairo. The monks told me the curse would work all the same. Now it has done so."

He shot himself in a cab a few days ago while responding to a summons to an inquest on Miss Mary Helen Nind, a school teacher who poisoned herself on account of unrequited love for him.

White spent many years in Egypt conducting excavations. During 1920 and 1921, working in Coptic monasteries in the Wadi-Natroun Valley, about seventy miles from Cairo, he discovered a secret room about ten feet square. There he found a number of Coptic and Arabic manuscripts.

After translating them there in the heat and dust and tormented by insects, he finally obtained permission to take the most important manuscripts to the Coptic Museum at Cairo.

The permission was grudging, the monks telling him any one interfering with relics came under the ban of an ancient curse.

WALTER JOHNSON CHOSEN THE BEST PLAYER OF 1924

Walter Johnson, pitching ace with the Washington club for 17 years, was chosen winner of the American League Trophy for 1924, which crowns him as the player of greatest value to his team during the championship season just closing.

Johnson's name goes into baseball's hall of fame along with George Sisler, manager of the St. Louis club, chosen the greatest player of the 1922 season, and Babe Ruth of the Yankees, who was awarded the honor in 1923. Johnson received a total of 55 points out of a possible 64 from the committee of experts chosen to make the award.

Eddie Collins of Chicago, long-time king of second basemen, ran a close second in the balloting, with a total of 49 points, and was the choice of all eight members of the trophy committee as the best player of the White Sox.

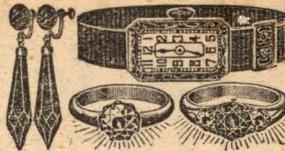
Johnson's name will be inscribed in the 1924 tablet on the \$100,000 baseball memorial to be erected in East Potomac Park, Washington, and presented to the Government by the American League as a memorial to the nation's greatest sport and a hall of fame for its greatest players. As a more personal testimonial of the honor conferred on them, the winner will be presented a diploma by the American League.

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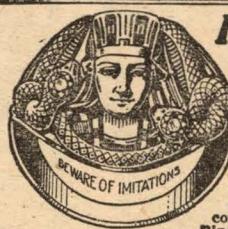
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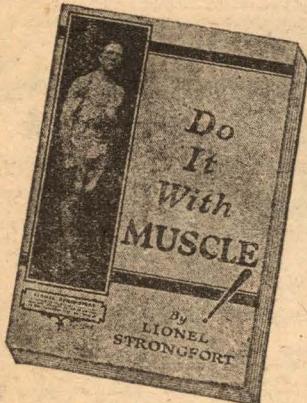
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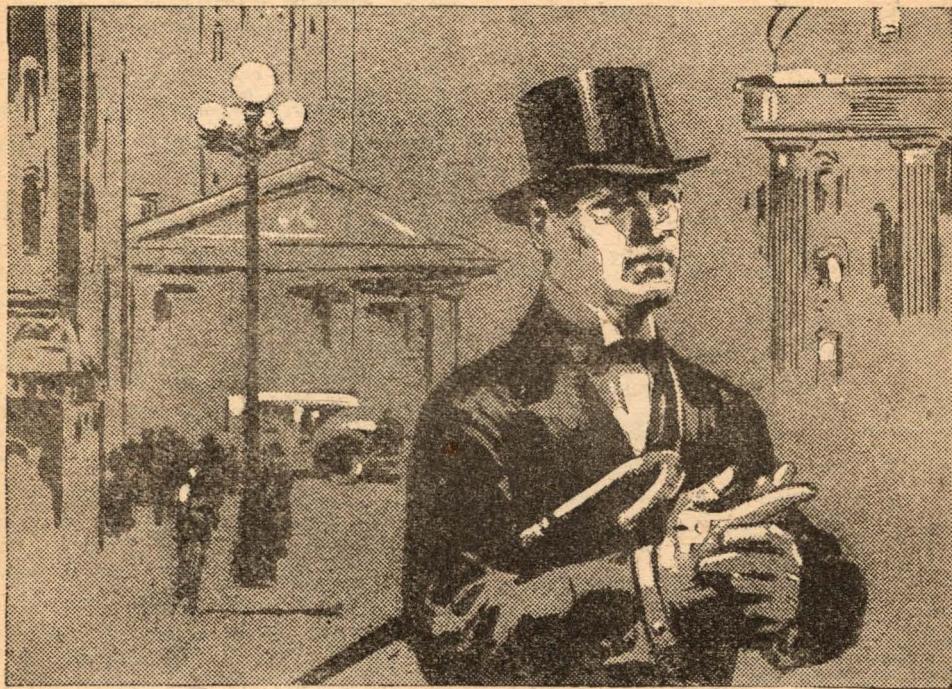
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